Daily Report

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Cuba

Alarcon Meets With Members of Key West Flotilla

FL2704020793 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Report by Roberto Cabada on Alarcon's meeting with members of the Key West "Enough" flotilla at the International Press Center in Havana—recorded]

[Text] Friends from Key West who arrived in Havana last night among a 10-boat flotilla did not wish to return to their country without first learning about our social reality from the mouths of our highest leaders. That is why they met this afternoon with comrade Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], along with a large number of reporters who also participated in the crossing, at the International Press Center.

Many questions were asked—some in English and some in Spanish. One of the members of the "Enough" group, sponsor of the solidarity aid to Cuba, asked about Cuba's interest in exploring and conquering the biotechnological and pharmaceutical fields, to which Ricardo Alarcon answered:

[Begin Alarcon recording] On the one hand I can assure you that Cuba has achieved many important things in this technological area. We produce some things that are not produced by others. We sell some products and hope that our exports in these sectors continue to increase. Of course, that is a sector, the worldwide pharmaceutical industry, where a group of multinational corporations have great influence and control. We are selling some of our products in other countries despite the U.S. embargo.

As for PPG, I can assure you that it is being bought out in the tourist shops. We still have not found a single person on the planet who throws away a container of PPG. [end recording]

Another of the questions by these sea dogs, friends of the Cuban people, was on protection of the environment by government authorities in Cuba. The president of the ANPP briefly commented on the historical programs that the Revolution has implemented since its triumph in 1959.

Again, just as 100 years ago, Key West is concerned about Cuba. In unison, they said "Enough" and went on their way.

Meets With Reporters, Flotilla Members

FL2704023793 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Text] Today, foreign journalists, most of whom accompanied the "Basta" flotilla from Key West, met with Politburo member Ricardo Alarcon, President of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP].

One of the reporters asked: What would be the policy of the Cuban Government if the embargo against Cuba were lifted, and how would it affect the work force? Alarcon answered: The first thing would be that Cuba would no longer denounce the embargo. This would also provide greater opportunities for tourism and to investors who are currently afraid of trading with Cuba. Alarcon added: As to the work force, how could it be any more affected than it has already been by the embargo?

On one occasion a foreign journalist asked if Cuban authorities feared the lifting of the embargo. The president of the ANPP reiterated that Cuba should be given the opportunity to see what would happen and that they should accept the challenge.

[Begin Alarcon recording in English with simultaneous translation into Spanish] That means that the lifting of the embargo, the elimination of that policy, would be the most important news for this country in an entire generation. [end recording]

As to the possibility of dialogue, the Cuban Government considers that the UN General Assembly expressed its rejection of the embargo policy. It is not about a dialogue to accept conditions or something in exchange, but that they comply with the UN resolution once and for all. The elections and Cuban democracy, the current situation of tourism, the food program, energy, and the environmental protection sectors were topics that were discussed with the foreign press.

Also present at the conference were members of the flotilla that brought a donation valued at $55,000 of the $100,000 permitted by a license issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce that expires in April 1995.

Contino Announces UJC May Day Parade Events

FL2404001093 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 2220 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Text] "I've Got May Day" is the slogan of the youth block which this year closes the May Day parade. This was announced by Juan Contino, the first secretary of the Union of Young Communists [UJC], during a news conference.

The youth will spend one day with the Blas Roca Contingents, working at the port of Havana in the sugarcane harvest, which is already a standard task, and at the debate center on young workers, which will be held on 27 April in Holguin. These events will precede May Day. The UJC is convening the youth with the colors of the fatherland, to form a marching block that is to meet at the Fountain of Youth. Twenty thousand Cuban and 26 July flags are already being prepared at the workshops of the national committee.

Contino added that the march will include Revolutionary Armed Forces and Ministry of the Interior

soldiers, and outstanding artists and athletes. Next to the pioneers, approximately 34 models will wear original outfits by designer Castillo in olive green, black, and the colors of the flag.

Large plaster figures, kites, men on stilts, painted cars, and a bicycle for ten will also be seen. The final screws are being tightened on a bicycle that might not find the appropriate rider due to its height of five meters, but which will undoubtely be one of the [words indistinct] against the embargo and for the fatherland.

Lezcano Participates in Defense Sunday Activities

FL2604131693 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] On 25 April, over 280,000 Havana residents participated in Defense Sunday on which they reaffirmed pledges of assistance to the patriotic march marking May Day. Members of the Territorial Troops Militia, Production and Defense Brigades, and other organizations mobilized early in the morning to firing ranges and training areas where various military training activities were held. Yesterday, several Havana areas were declared Ready for Defense in the Second Phase. Jorge Lezcano, member of the Politburo and the first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in Havana, participated with other officials in ceremonies promoting a large number of officers and militiamen.

High-Ranking Authorities Tour Isle of Youth

FL2604021893 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Here in our country, the people of Isle of Youth, for example, are working hard to solve resource problems now exacerbated by the special period.

At the proposal of Army General Raul Castro, minister of the FAR [Revolutionary Armed Forces], the top leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] for the provinces that the Western Army defends is visiting the Isle of Youth to find out about the work of the residents of the Isle of Pines under special-period conditions.

The initiatives for changes in food services at specialized (?shops), the diversification of production at centers such as the citrus processing complex, the results obtained in self-sufficiency by various entities, and the measures taken to save oil in generating electricity in a province not incorporated into the national power system were some of the matters that most interested the leadership of the Western Army and the PCC authorities from Pinar del Rio, Havana City, and Havana Provinces.

An extensive exhibit of the achievements of Isle of Youth during the special period allowed them to learn of the work the people's councils are doing to satisfy domestic needs in their area; of the advances that have been made in production of biological resources for use in agriculture, in which the island is already self-sufficient; and of the studies being carried out with a view to introducing new varieties of seeds for consumption by animals and the alternatives that have been tried with a view to satisfying the need for construction materials.

Participating in this tour of the Isle of Youth are Division General Leopoldo Cintra Frias, Politburo member and chief of the Western Army; Candido Palmero, Politburo member and PCC first secretary in Havana; Fidel Ramos Perera, PCC first secrtary in Pinar del Rio; and Glenda Azoy, from the PCC bureau in the city of Havana. The latter two are members of the Central Committee. They are accompanied by Emilio Gonzalez Farrat, member of the Central Committee and the PCC first secretary on the Isle of Youth.

ANPP Vice President Comments on Energy Plan

PA2604164193 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 25 Apr 93

[Report on interview with Jaime Crombet, vice president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, ANPP, by Barbara Betancourt; date and place not given]

[Text] The National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP] on 24 April formed a temporary commission on the energy plan. It will dissolve at the end of June, when the ANPP's first ordinary session will discuss the country's energy plan. The commission will be presided over by ANPP Vice President Jaime Crombet, who explained the commission's main tasks during a news conference.

[Begin recording] [Crombet] The commission will present one report on the implementation of the National Energy Plan, in addition to the difficulties it faces, its short-term perspective, at least until 1995, and several guidelines. It will serve as an information source for the debates at the ANPP. In addition, we would like to begin a movement of sorts. As we explained at the Seventh Forum on Energy in 1992, there is already an ongoing movement. The main issue then was the energy plan. This is a continuation of that discussion and we must continue to make the people aware, motivate the people, seek alternative conservation solutions, achieve greater efficiency, and find new renewable energy sources that already exist in the country. We must find ways to use new fuel sources in the most effective way possible, in addition to getting the most out of the country's existing resources.

There must be continuous progress. An important part of that is creating national awareness that the energy problem is the main economic problem facing the country, as we do not have abundant natural energy resources. We are an oil-producing country, but our oil is heavy and high in sulfur. We are using it as our main source of fuel and we wish we had much more, although our production level could be higher. We do not have

major rivers or hydroelectric resources and our existing hydroelectric resources are relatively scarce. We do not have coal. We have limited natural energy resources in the country, which is why we must use what we have very rationally and efficiently. One of the main energy sources is bagasse, or straw, and other waste from the sugar harvest. That alone is equal to 5 or 6 million tons of fuel oil, depending on the size of the harvest. This is an excellent renewable resource. Another excellent resource is the efficiency with which we use energy. It has been proven that when we apply technology with discipline we can increase the potential capacity of the same amount of available energy by 10, 15, and even 20 percent. Efficiency, then, is very important in producing electricity. We must use our thermal electrical productive capacity more efficiently, in the best possible conditions, even if we do use our domestic oil production. That in itself has been an enormous technical struggle with impressive results, because we must maintain our thermal electric plants as well due to the increased corrosive effects of our oil from its higher sulfur content. That is very important.

[Betancourt] How will the commission work, from a practical point of view, given the short amount of time left? You have to present your report at the end of June.

[Crombet] The idea is to work intensively and plan the creation of temporary provincial commissions. In addition to the creation of the temporary commissions at the provincial assemblies, we will promote a similar form of consultation with the participation of the mass organizations in the provinces, the main organizations, committees, and specialists, to form a sort of territorial section on what each province is doing to develop and intensify all the measures implemented by the National Energy Plan.

We want to do the same in the municipalities and even the people's councils. We want to deploy a mass movement, with the support of every work center, school, and Armed Forces unit. We want to give the effort continuity, so that it continues after the debates at the ANPP. Everyone can make some sort of contribution, no matter how small. No one in the country can avoid the energy crisis, because it affects our life day and night, from the smallest child to the oldest adult.

[Betancourt] Thus, will the conclusions and recommendations made by each of those temporary commissions be included in one final document?

[Crombet] On 1 June, every state central administrative agency and every institution in the country will have to present a report to the commission on how it is implementing the Energy Plan, as well as the institutions' plans for 1995 and beyond. In addition, the same will have to be done by each of the country's territories. With these two recommendations, the state agencies report and the territorial report, the commission will have a complete overview of the situation. In addition, they will be able to rely on the personal experiences of those deputies, who are members of the commission, during their direct contact with the grass roots, the work centers, and the mass organizations; in other words, personal experiences of the deputies during their travels through the whole country, meeting and holding discussions with the municipal and provincial assemblies. By using those reports and personal experiences, we will be able to prepare the final report we plan to present to the ANPP scheduled to take place at the end of June. [end recording]

It is clear that this commission does not plan to draft a new national energy program. Its purpose is to evaluate the implementation of the current program already approved by the Cuban Government. The main objective of the country's energy program is the gradual reduction of imported fuel and substituting it for renewable and conventional supplies found in the country, as well as encouraging the use of other alternative sources. Its objective is to analyze the current energy program, evaluate its implementation, and make recommendations on improvements and adaptions to the present conditions.

The presidents and ministers of the principal state agencies involved in the National Energy Plan participated in the events establishing the temporary commission. They provided the commission members with an up-to-date report on Cuba's energy situation, as well as its outlook.

Officials Urge 'Ingenuity' in Resolving Energy Problem

FL2404141093 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Text] At a Villa Clara working meeting of representatives of production and research centers connected with solving the energy problem, Pedro Miret, vice president of the Council of Ministers, said that through constant and dedicated work, the energy problems in the nation will be identified and overcome. Miret, who is also chairman of the national committee of the Eighth Science and Technology Forum, referred to a recent CTC [Cuban Workers Federation] agreement to promote, through the worker movement, the response necessary to find solutions [to problems arising] in connection with the nation's energy situation.

At the Santa Clara meeting, Eugenio Mainegra, chief of the Central Committee's Basic Industry Department, said our workers' ingenuity should be put to use in seeking energy efficiency. Reference was made to the mini hydroelectric plants at the dams and to the increasing use of cane chaff in bulk (?by) the sugar mills.

Fuel Mixture Studied; Power Plant Breakdown Repaired

FL2404153993 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Text] Basic Industry Minister Marcos Portal has emphasized that the Isle of Youth constitutes an example for Cuba in applying measures designed to reduce fuel consumption. He expressed interest in the results of introducing the use of a diesel and fuel oil mixture to generate electricity.

Ciego de Avila Province reports that in view of the emergency that occurred in that eastern province on 21 April, the Raul Martinez Thermoelectric Plant in Vicente is using oil from Ciego de Avila Province to generate electricity.

Meanwhile, it has been confirmed in Santiago de Cuba that generation at the Antonio Maceo Power Plant, formerly known as the (Reate) plant, is returning to normal after the breakdown that put that plant out of the system for over 24 hours and caused an interruption of service to the eastern provinces, in addition to Camaguey and Ciego de Avila.

Modification of Transportation Habits Viewed

PA2404230093 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Commentary by Roberto Morejon]

[Text] The devastating effects on the Cuban economy of the disappearance of the Socialist bloc, especially of the Soviet Union, have centered mainly on the energy and automotive transportation sectors. The Caribbean island has had to find ways to survive a drastic decrease in fuel supplies that used to come from the former Soviet Union and which the Caribbean island used to acquire at fair prices.

This situation is no longer true and the consequences are fully known. Cuba has been forced to redirect its economic plans and state fuel consumption patterns because it received little more than 13 million tons of petroleum in 1989. Its ports received only 10 million tons in 1990. In 1991 8 million tons arrived, and only 6 million tons arrived in 1992, less than 50 percent of what the country required.

A reduction in fuel supplies and in spare parts shipments, which also came from the former Soviet Union and the rest of the Socialist community, severely hit the local automotive transportation sector. We must recall Cuba used to acquire at fair prices from the former Soviet Union a majority of its fleet of aircraft, trucks, tractors, and other equipment. Their inflow, however, stopped abruptly after the changes that occurred there.

The shipment of vehicles and spare parts for urban passenger transportation, whose fleet is mainly Hungarian-made, also stopped. At present (Icarus) Hungarian buses are making fewer runs through Cuba's main cities without any possibility of replacing them in view of a lack of foreign currency. Cubans have resorted to riding locally-made bicycles and bicycles imported at an accelerated pace from the PRC, while citizens in the countryside are increasingly resorting to animal-driven vehicles.

In times when the largest of the Antilles must spend 45 percent of its import capacity in purchasing petroleum and its derivatives, the government must save the rest of its financial resources to purchase food, medicine, and other basic staples.

Thus, Cubans are starting to modify drastically their transportation habits by doing without buses. But many claim that bicycles are here to stay, thanks to the positive effects they have on health and the environment.

* Municipal Administrative Councils Explained

93CA0104A Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish 29 Mar 93 p 2

[Article by Caridad Lafita Navarro]

[Text] In conjunction with the innovations that we made in the last elections, with autochthonous methods of reinforcing democracy, we also have the challenge of what is new, of what represents a breaking of patterns, for the sake of improving the people's government.

Therefore, I am dwelling on the administrative councils scheduled to be created in the municipalities from 29 March to 4 April, and in the provinces between 5 and 18 April.

The experience of several five-year people's government terms, as well as the opinions expressed by the people at the assemblies held to discuss the Convocation to the Party's Fourth Congress, with the pertinent resolution issued, recommended a separation of the government organ (the executive committee) from the assembly, the latter representing the state's power.

This ends the dichotomy that existed, which would be detrimental to the administrative control of the government's activities, and to a better performance by the assembly as a representative organ.

A few days ago, a discerning and critical reader of the newspaper remarked to me, with our native wit: "Won't it be the same little animal, with a different collar?" I had to explain, and managed to make him understand me somewhat, convincing him that this was not so: The executive committee and the administrative council are not the same thing, either in structure or in functions.

The Constitution of the Republic calls for the creation of organs of administration by the provincial and municipal people's government assemblies.

The rules recently issued by the Council of Ministers' Executive Committee to regulate the organization and

operation of the provincial and municipal administrative councils, on a provisional basis, determine their structure and composition, as well as their powers and the manner in which the positions will be filled.

Owing to its imminent creation, we are dwelling on the municipal administrative council, which will be the organ of higher local management within the municipal administration. It will be collegiate in nature, and its preeminent function will be to direct the economic, productive, and service entities on that level.

This council will consist of the president of the respective people's government municipal assembly and its vice president, as well as the one or more vice presidents and the secretary of the municipal administration to be designated.

Also to be members of the organ are the chiefs of administrative managements or of other economic, productive, and service entities in the territory, regardless of their subordination.

Except for the president and vice president of the assembly, the other members will be designated by it, at its president's proposal.

Thus, the municipal administrative council will direct the administrative activity in the demarcated area, with its functions based on constitutional principles and the law.

The council has multiple powers, including the creation, direction, and control of the subordinate entities, within the bounds of its jurisdiction.

A significant link appears when the municipal administrations' relations with the people's councils are regulated. This is aimed at analyzing and giving proper procedural treatment to the proposals received from the latter for the operation of the territory's subordinate units and centers.

The constitutional text notes that the powers of the municipal assemblies include control and supervision of the administrative council's activity. Assistance for this is received from the permanent working commissions comprised of the delegates whom we elect.

On the one hand, there is the state's power with the assemblies; and, on the other, the government function, through the administrative councils. The assemblies are responsible for control, aided by their permanent commissions.

These changes are meant to improve the state and the functions of its organs. The purpose is to heighten the effectiveness of their work and the fulfillment of the role played by them, based on the new realities and the adjustments intended to reinforce our democracy and the social plan that we uphold.

* New Exile Group Formed, Presents Positions

93CA0104B Mexico City ESTE PAIS in Spanish Mar 93 pp 35-37

[Interview with "Change for Cuba" members Eloy Gutierrez Menollo and Max Lesnik, by Henry Raymont in Washington; date not given; first paragraph is ESTE PAIS introduction]

[Text] Washington--While Bill Clinton was taking possession of the U.S. Government, a languid figure, resembling a graying Don Quixote, in civilian clothes, arrived in Washington to announce the formation of "Change for Cuba," a new Cuban organization in exile. It was the by now legendary Eloy Gutierrez Menollo, a native of Spain and former comrade in arms of Fidel Castro, converted into a counterrevolutionary. After having spent 22 years in prison, he regained his freedom thanks to Felipe Gonzalez' mediation. While proclaiming his entry into the political battle with another prominent leader of the Cuban exiles' moderate wing, Max Lesnik, Gutierrez Menollo defined his personal orientation as social democratic. However, he declared that he was opening the organization's doors to all those, regardless of their ideology, who are ready to hold dialogue and prevent the dissatisfaction existing in Cuba and the efforts of other counterrevolutionary groups from leading to violence and foreign intervention. During their stay in Washington, Gutierrez Menollo and Lesnik discussed their objectives with ESTE PAIS.

Changes Without Foreign Intervention

[Raymont] What is "Change for Cuba"?

[Gutierrez Menollo] It is really an organization of Cubans who think that, during the 12 years of Republican administrations, all the methods and tactics used in dealing with the Cuban issue have been completely obsolete. We want peaceful changes made in Cuba without foreign intervention of any kind. And we think that such changes could unquestionably prevent a useless bloodbath that would result in a foreign intervention that we do not want.

[Raymont] What strategy is being proposed to attain your goals?

[Gutierrez Menollo] Well, really, in the first place, it would attempt to project an image of the exiles as not reactionary, but rather progressive. Hence, it would give an opportunity for Cubans with a progressive mentality to convey a positive message to Cuba. It is necessary to elect Cubans who will offer certain guarantees inside Cuba, to those who are there, that they are not bringing a policy of revenge or hatred, but rather a policy of love, reconstruction, and family unification.

[Raymont] As part of that plan, how do you view the National Cuban-American Foundation, knowing its ideological position?

[Gutierrez Menollo] Well, in this case our main adversary is Castro. In other words, we do not think that we have to waste energy attacking anyone. Each person has his own position, his own policy. But, in fact, at best, we might count on them regarding issues that could represent something positive for Cuba in the future; don't you agree? But we would not count on those elements now, because their position is totally opposed to ours. For example, they are the ones directly promoting the Torricelli Law; whereas we do not support the Torricelli Law. We think that it means granting another country's congress the right to decide whether or not there will be liberty in our country.

[Raymont] You have stated that you do not think that the Clinton government has paid sufficient attention to Cuba's problem to be able to reach a decision on whether or not it will hold dialogue with Castro. What desire does "Change for Cuba" have for a dialogue? And if you achieve it, what support could you count on inside and outside Cuba?

[Gutierrez Menollo] We have formed a group that could undoubtedly contribute to a dialogue and to the search for a peaceful solution, as well as to the formation of a genuine position. We are fighting for a cause, and to fight for a cause we must have a political formation. I would say that perhaps none of those figures with recognized economic prestige is backing us. We have no millionaires in our organization, but we do have hundreds and hundreds of members from the middle class and the poor class.

[Lesnik] Let me explain that the "Change for Cuba" group is an organization headed by Gutierrez Menollo for the reconstruction of Cuba. To resolve the exiles' situation, we must also achieve a solution to the dispute between Cuba and the United States, because the Castro rhetoric is based on the rhetoric of the threat from abroad. That is why we believe that the United States should declare its rejection of invasion, as a fundamental point. The United States should unilaterally declare that it respects Cuba as a nation, as a government, and as a people.

Fidel Is No Ogre

[Raymont] How do you define the ideological position of "Change for Cuba"?

[Gutierrez Menollo] I, personally, define myself as a social democrat. But we cannot characterize "Change for Cuba" in the same way, because it has members of all persuasions. We have started out on one basis: The reconstruction of Cuba belongs to all Cubans alike, whatever their militancy may be, whatever ideology they may have, and whatever their color or creed. So, during that phase we want to pool the efforts of all Cubans, because we consider Cuba's reconstruction to be the principal task. So, we do not want a continuation of things, for example, such as Fidel Castro declaring "I am going to make my revolution," and it is his revolution, period, with no room for anything apart from it. We think that there is room for all in Cuba's reconstruction.

[Raymont] Is there room for everyone, even Fidel Castro?

[Gutierrez Menollo] No, Fidel Castro is the obstacle. In our view, Fidel Castro does not represent reconstruction; in our view, Fidel Castro represents destruction. If he represented reconstruction during the 30-odd years that he has spent in the government, he would have proven it, wouldn't he?

[Lesnik] But, if he contributes to the Cuban reconstruction phase, we shall never oppose his being one of the factors in the solution. Furthermore, he could be the principal factor in the solution if he wants.

[Raymont] But could you talk with Fidel Castro?

[Gutierrez Menollo] There could, unquestionably, be a discussion with Fidel. Come on, Fidel isn't any ogre, making us afraid of talking with him. Now, what could not be discussed is any type of solution that would contribute to Castro's remaining in power. If we are seeking a peaceful solution, it is, after all, to prevent bloodshed that would end up with Castro and with foreign intervention.

[Raymont] Do you regard it as viable to think that the United States, with the new world order, or disorder, and the internal pressures confronting Clinton, might consider intervention in Cuba?

[Gutierrez Menollo] The scenario is as follows: If Castro retains his "intransigence," he causes the collapse of the system. The collapse of the system, for lack of oxygen, could create a civil war. If there is chaos 90 miles from the United States, there is no way that the United States would not intervene. Cuba has always been something important to the United States, and if we add to that the manner in which the Cuban exiles have influenced internal politics in Washington, the dynamics lead us to intervention without much regard for the consequences. On the other hand, there are circumstances favoring peaceful change. To begin with, all those surrounding Castro on all levels, all of them, want change. Perhaps even Castro wants changes, but not in a way that would cost him his head.

Contacts Soon in Mexico

[Raymont] In view of the fact that Mexico has always maintained a respectful dialogue with Cuba, do you think that the Mexican Government might at some point use its influence in search of a peaceful solution? This would be in everyone's interest if a scenario such as the one that you visualize should occur.

[Gutierrez Menollo] I believe that it could play a very positive role, just like Spain. I intend to make some contacts soon in Mexico, in the hope that they will listen to us, and also that in the United States they will realize that the Cuban exiles do not consist exclusively of

reactionary elements. I think that there is a very interesting precedent, namely, that of the Contadora Group in the case of the Central American crisis. Mexico played a highly constructive role there. I wish that it could play a similar role in the Cuban case, before it is too late and a new maelstrom spreads over the Caribbean!

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Organization of Development Foundations Holds Annual Meeting

FL2304175393 Bridgetown CANA in English 1705 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Text] Castries, St. Lucia, April 23, CANA—The East Caribbean Organisation of Development Foundations (ECODEF) holds its sixth annual general meeting here on Saturday amid a call for the body to be more aggressive.

ECODEF's regional director, Milton Lawrence in his annual report to the meeting said the global environment was making it imperative for regional organisations such as ECODEF to change their style regarding development projects.

"The rapid changes taking place in the world today and the potential threat of marginalisation of small Caribbean states require an aggressive and pro-active approach by regional organisations such as ECODEF to ensure that the vital development programmes of members...do not disappear," he said.

Lawrence said the new thinking would also necessitate new creativity and innovation in programme planning and progressive management and business practices.

Lawrence said ECODEF had already approached the French- administered Caisse Francaise de Development (CFD) with a proposal to make soft loans available to the National Development Foundations [NDF] for on-lending to specific productive sectors.

"The proposal is being favourably considered and CFD has agreed to use NDF as a model and to consider an initial fund of 400,000 French francs," he said.

He said ECODEF had also submitted a proposal to the Inter- American Foundation to fund a programme to assist "sister non- governmental organisations in developing their management capacity".

Inaugurated in 1987, ECODEF groups individual NDFs of the eastern Caribbean. Its principal objectives include fostering the institutional development of the NDFs in providing ongoing credit, training and technical assistance to micro and small business people.

The director of the Economic Affairs Secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Dr. Bernard Yankey will deliver the feature address at the annual meeting.

Barbados

Member of Parliament Reaffirms Commitment to DLP

FL2504210393 Bridgetown CANA in English 1849 GMT 25 Apr 93

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, April 25, CANA—A Barbados Government backbencher has reaffirmed his commitment to the ruling Democratic Labour Party [DLP] in a published letter responding to criticisms by the DLP's public relations officer.

MP [Member of Parliament] Joseph "Johnny" Tudor acknowledged failure in getting concerns of his constituents addressed within the machinery of the ruling party, but re-stated his support for the party.

"It must be stated that I am not and will not be part of any unconstitutional exercise to bring down the government," said Tudor in his letter, published in today's Sunday SUN newspaper. P.R.O. Reggie Hunte, Jr. last weekend questioned Tudor's support for the party and criticised unnamed "dead weight," "parasitic elements," "hoodwinkers," and "falsifiers." Tudor said: "He claims the Democratic Labour Party attorney, [words indistinct] of these than any other political party. Is this not a case of classic self-destruction?"

A decision by DLP MP trade unionist Leroy Trotman to become an independent; and continued criticism of Prime Minister Erskine Sandiford by backbencher and former junior finance minister, Harold Blackman, have been mentioned by party critics as examples of internal problems within the DLP's ranks. Government's parliamentary members, however, continue to back the prime minister and official policies.

Dominica

Banana Farmers Protest Loss of Traditional Payment

FL2604175793 Bridgetown CANA in English 1655 GMT 26 Apr 93

[By Ken Richards]

[Text] Roseau, Dominica, April 26, CANA—Angry banana farmers on Monday stormed the Goodwill Parish Hall and prevented the annual general meeting of the Dominica Banana Marketing Corporation (DBMC) from taking place.

Their action was to protest the non-payment by the DBMC of a traditional price increase which banana growers receive for their fruit every summer.

The growers, led by the official opposition United Workers Party (UWP), had gathered outside the building to press for banana officials inside to give attention to their request for payment of the price increase.

But after it was announced that Prime Minister Dame Eugenia Charles would not address the meeting as originally scheduled, tempers flared and a few farmers stormed the building, followed later by others.

Amidst the noisy protest, Agriculture Minister Maynard Joseph tried without success to get the farmers to come quietly into the parish hall so he could address them.

"Come and address us outside where we are," the protestors demanded.

Joseph later took up a microphone being used by the farmers, told them they had made their point and that they should have allowed the DBMC meeting to continue. His comments were greeted by loud chants of "no".

"The question of the summer price increase is being looked at very closely by all parties concerned," Joseph told the growers, emphasizing there were several factors whiih had led to the decision not to pay the summer price increase.

"Government is looking at the matter ... and if the possibility (of a price increase) arises ,you will be informed," the minister said.

The DBMC, however, is sticking to its position that it cannot pay the price increase because of financial difficulties. It said low banana prices had led to a loss of EC4.15 million dollars (one EC dollar ; 37 cents US) in the last quarter of 1992 alone.

"The expected increase in the summer price of bananas has not been realised due to large volumes of fruit entering the (British export) market from other ACP (African Caribbean and Pacific) countries, and the present low exchange rate of the pound sterling makes matters even worse" a DBMC statement said.

Agriculture Minister Joseph said the DBMC meeting had been rescheduled for Wednesday.

Opposition leader Edison James said farmers expected a response to their concerns before Wednesday. Prior to today's protest, he had written Prime Minister Charles suggesting the government could find the money to pay he increase.

During the protest, farmers gave several indications of their seriousness about the issue.

"If when the announcements are read on the national radio station lunchtime Tuesday, there is no word on the increase of the banana price, Wednesday morning we will be back up here to demonstrate in large numbers," one grower said to rousing cheers.

Others took to the microphone to urge the government to find a speedy solution to the issue, failing which, they warned, there would be escalated protests.

Haiti

Interior Ministry Reassures Population on APN Strike

FL2604151493 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] The first news this morning is the call for a general strike to demand the return to power of the ousted president. People's National Assembly, APN, claimed this strike. This organization, which had chosen 16 April for the resignation of the current authorities, considers that this general strike, if followed, would express the will of the majority in favor of the return of Father Aristide.

In reaction to this call for a strike, the Ministry of Interior announced that measures were already being taken to assure everyone's safety and allow the population to carry on its activities.

Police Prepare To 'Guarantee Order'

FL2604151993 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Port-au-Prince Police announced to the population that according to the information services, people from some political sectors were planning within the next few days to disturb the social and economic life of the country The military department of the metropolitan area, as part of its mission to protect lives and property, reassures the general public that all measures have been taken in this command to guarantee order and social peace.

Strike Affects Port-au-Prince Schools

FL2604153593 Port-au-Prince Radio Tropic FM in Creole 1200 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Our reporters have told us that today's strike mostly has affected the school sector in Port-au-Prince. Jeansoi Joseph brings us details.

[Begin recording] [Joseph] The 26 April general strike has very strongly hit the downtown education sector, affecting schools such as Smith Duplessy on Du Centre Street, Tertulien Guilbaud and Republic of Venezuela on Dr. Aubry and Des Fronts Forts Streets, Faustin Premier Private High School on Saint-Martin Street, and others that we managed to visit. We noted that several public vehicles are ensuring transportation between Cite Soleil, downtown, the Airport area, and Delmas. However, the people who want to go to Bon Repos, Croix-des-Bouquets, Croix-des-Missions, and Petion-Ville via Delmas are having great difficulty finding public vehicles. We asked a Croix-des-Bouquets driver and he told us the following.

[Unidentified driver] I ensure transportation between Croix-des-Bouquets and downtown Port-au-Prince.

[Joseph] I have noted that there are not many cars on the road, just you and another driver. What happened to you this morning?

[Driver] Well, I have come to the streets [to work].... I understand the purpose of the strike, but I am obliged to work because I have a wife, children, and you know....

[Joseph, interrupting] But what about the other drivers? Have you noted many vehicles on the road?

[Driver] I have seen a few on the road. One must work.

[Joseph] The National People's Assembly called for this general strike for 26 April on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the Fort-Dimanche massacre on 26 April 1986. [end recording]

Business, Service Sectors Unaffected

FL2604233393 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Excerpts] The call for a general strike launched by the People's National Assembly, APN, provoked no disturbance in downtown activities. The business sector, public services, and automobile traffic are functioning normally. Only the schools have slowed down. Rothschild Francois has a live report:

[Francois] Good afternoon. What we have to say is that the People's National Assembly has really failed in its call for a strike today to demand the return of President Aristide to Haiti and dismissal of the government led by Marc L. Bazin.

From where we are, activities appear basically normal. The stores are open, public transportation is running normally on almost all the routes. There are people downtown. The street vendors are also here on the occasion of this strike, which has not been heeded by the population of Port-au-Prince. [passage omitted]

Some people believe the strike is an arm that has been used too many times, and has therefore lost its impact. Others say they support the strike, but cannot afford to comply with it because of the economic situation. [passage omitted].

It seems the schools have been affected by this call for a strike because not many students have been observed on the streets of Port-au-Prince. Some schools had to send their students home, while others appear to be functioning almost normally today. It is the only sector touched by this general strike launched by APN.

Presidential Commission Assesses Negotiations

FL2604210893 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] In Port-au-Prince, the Presidential Commission assessed the negotiations. According to Father Adrien, coordinator of the commission formed by Father Aristide to negotiate his return, the latest visit to Haiti by mediator Dante Caputo has helped to further the negotiations. Meanwhile Adrien invited the people to support the steps currently being taken, and the position of the ousted president.

The commission, which was scheduled to begin the negotiations [as heard], expressed itself on three points deemed essential at this phase of the crisis: the question of amnesty; the formation of a government of national concord; and reactions to Dante Caputo's latest mission in Port-au-Prince.

People's Organizations: Gourgue for Prime Minister

FL2604224293 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] The congress held by people's organizations at the Holiday Inn Plaza Hotel on 22 April resulted in the following: The organizations announced that they had chosen Professor Gerard Gourgue as an honest, credible, and competent candidate for the post of prime minister.

Gourgue is first and foremost a professional, a secondary school owner who lives off the fruits of his labor. He has occupied the following posts: teacher at the Alexandre Petion Public High School, teacher of penal law at the Faculty of Law, teacher and coordinator at the [National Institute of Management and] International Studies, Haiti's representative on the board of directors of the Inter-American Institute in France, chief of the Social Defense Division at the Institute of Social Welfare and Research, president and founding member of the Haitian Human Rights League, and member and justice minister [as heard] of the National Council of Government. He was chosen by the National Concerted Action Front to run for the presidency of the Republic of Haiti in the 29 November 1987 elections.

According to the people's organizations, Prof. Gourgue has political experience and is a great credit to national and international authorities. He is an independent citizen who does not belong to any political party. He is competent, serious, and honest, and has proven his objectivity during all the crises that have been wreaking havoc on the country since September 1991 and which [words indistinct] to calm the spirit and to return confidence to all sectors of national life.

In accordance with the reasons listed, [words indistinct] who were mandated by the people's organizations including the National Confederation of People's Organizations; the federations of the South, the Grand'Anse, the Southeast, the Southwest, the North, the Northeast, and the Northwest believe Professor Gerard Gourgue to be the man of the moment and the citizen most qualified to hold the post of prime minister of the Republic of Haiti at this current junction.

Pro-Aristide Posters Observed in Les Cayes

FL2604212793 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Excerpt] Posters demanding the return of Father Aristide were widely distributed in Les Cayes. Duperval Joseph Frank has more details:

[Begin Duperval recording in Creole] Indeed, since the weekend, more pictures of the exiled president, with slogans in favor his return, could be observed in corners of the city of Les Cayes and its surroundings. [passage omitted] [end recording]

St. Lucia

Compton: 'Cautious Optimism' on Economic Forecast

FL2604180593 Bridgetown CANA in English 1723 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Castries, St. Lucia, April 26, CANA—St. Lucia's economy grew by 6.2 percent in 1992, due largely to strong performances in the banana, tourism and construction industries, Prime Minister John Compton has announced.

Compton told Parliament Friday the recovery followed a "significant deceleration in 1991" associated with adverse weather conditions which affected banana production and exports.

He said between 1985 and 1990 the economy continued its upward progression led by the banana industry and there was an average rate of economic growth of six percent.

Compton said banana exports, which rose from 99,000 tonnes in 1991 to 137,000 tonnes in 1992, contributed to the 6.2 percent economic growth.

"The performance in both the tourism and the construction sectors continued to be strong with an increase of 9.4 per cent in tourist arrivals in 1992 over the same period in 1991. The contribution of the industrial sector continues to be modest and this situation is not expected to change significantly during 1993," he said.

Compton said that based on past performance and future projections, the economic outlook for St. Lucia, "can best be described as one of cautious optimism".

He outlined six areas, including increased productivity and wage restraint, to contain inflation and improve competitiveness. The prime minister said these factors would affect future economic growth.

"If these events occur and these targets are achieved, St. Lucia can look forward to an economic growth rate of between six and 6.5 percent per annum, continuing improvement in the standard of living, improved educational opportunities and the provision of approximately 3,000 additional jobs per annum," he said.

Debate on the government's EC$42.7 million dollar (one EC dollar - 37 U.S. cents) budget was due to start Monday afternoon.

Official Calls For 'Atmosphere of Respect' at Border

PA2304163693 Mexico City XHTV Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Text] Government Secretary Patrocinio Gonzalez Blanco has urged the governors at the border between Mexico and the United States to create an atmosphere of respect and peaceful coexistence at the border area, which will promote better standards of living.

Nuevo Leon Governor Socrates Rizzo Garcia read the agreement whereby the governors of the states along the Mexico-U.S. border agreed on the following:

Full support for the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], as it was negotiated and signed by the chiefs of state and of government of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. In the second point of the agreement, the governors urge the (?Executive) Branches of their respective countries to conclude, as soon as possible, negotiations on the bilateral agreements, and the Legislative Branches to give the treaty final approval so that it will be implemented as of 1 January 1994.

They also committed themselves to mobilizing their economic, social, and political groups to support NAFTA and to contribute to its final approval.

To conclude, they recognized the commitment made by four U.S. border governors in sending a letter to this effect to President William Clinton and the national governors' conference. The agreement is signed by the 10 governors of the states along the Mexico-U.S. border.

Nuevo Leon Governor Socrates Rizzo Garcia, Baja California Governor Ernesto Rufo (Arce); Coahuila Governor Eliseo Mendoza Barrueto; Chihuahua Governor Francisco Barrios Torrazas; Sonora Governor Mario Fabio Beltrones; and Tamaulipas Governor Manuel Cavazos (Lerma) signed the agreement on behalf of Mexico. Arizona Govenor Fife Symington; California Governor Pete Wilson; New Mexico Governor Bruce King; and Texas Governor Ann Richards signed on behalf of the United States.

* Monterrey Entrepreneur on Cuba Investments

93CA0096A Mexico City PROCESO In Spanish No 852, 1 Mar 93 pp 38-39

[Article by Antonio Jaquez]

[Text] Monterrey, Nuevo Leon—Given the changes in Cuba, with more intensive economic and political reforms than are taking place in Mexico, more Mexicans will join the flow of foreign investment going to Cuba, says Monterrey businessman Mauricio Fernandez Garza, one of the first to establish a joint enterprise there, which he did last October.

He said: "Many myths about Cuba are being shattered; they include the axiom that Cuba is Fidel Castro, Castro is communism, communism is the devil, and, therefore, Cuba is the devil. You have to learn to separate politics from economics. Part of the businessman's job is to look for investment opportunities.... And that is precisely what Cuba offers now, moving from an economy that was definitely closed to foreign investment to one that has really opened up."

"The economic change is so extensive," he explains, "that it includes areas that were considered national bastions, like the sugar industry. In addition to providing job, tax, and infrastructure opportunities, the package of incentives includes association formulas in which the foreign investor can be a majority partner. Economic liberalization received legal backing in March 1991 with Decree-Law No. 50, which has been expanded with new features."

As proof, he displays Cuban Government documents intended for foreign investors, citing advantages to foreign investors—including cheap labor costs—and the areas in which Cuba "is interested in forming associations," which are practically all areas.

Fernandez Garza, a member of the Garza Sada dynasty and former PAN [National Action Party] mayor of San Pedro, says he will soon make a new mining investment in Cuba, in association with Danny Tafich, a Monterrey textile manufacturer, with whom he last October established the Cuban joint enterprise ITC [International Textile Corporation].

He says his first business experience in Cuba was "a tedious process, not free from difficulties. That was understandable, as Cuba has not been accustomed to this type of business venture." Among the problems were obstacles some ministries created, "wanting things they were not entitled to." Bottlenecks also arose in transportation. "These are common problems when getting started, and they are not at all comparable with the really outstanding results we are obtaining."

He summarized: "ITC is producing top quality fabrics, with which we can compete with any country. Everything produced has been sold." Among ITC's Cuban textile plants is one in Santa Clara, with very high technology, designed by Japanese with Belgian equipment, and the Santiago plant, which has about 2,000 looms. "These are enormous plants, with machinery that works marvelously and with people who know how to weave, but the raw material they had been using was terrible; they were processing trash, Russian cotton that was sent to them. It was like putting crude petroleum in a Rolls Royce. We are providing quality raw materials," he says.

Both in the negotiations to establish ITC and in solving problems that have arisen in its operation, "the extraordinary determination of the Government of Cuba has been clear, particularly on the part of the members of the CECE [State Committee for Economic Cooperation], whose secretary is Carlos Lage, who in fact is a son of

prime minister. I have been in contact with this group, which is the spearhead of economic change. I call them the reformers."

His new investment will be in mining: "Cuba has the world's largest, but not richest, cobalt reserves; they are of very low quality. In fact, they were leaving the cobalt as a residue in nickel, of which they are the world's leading producers. We are trying a refining process to remove the cobalt from the nickel. To date we have gotten it out as sulfate. In the samples they have sent me, we have already obtained cobalt oxide. This is good for the Cubans; they obtain added value, they sell the nickel at the same price, but if you remove the cobalt it is worth something. We are just about to reach a definite agreement."

"I also serve as a link between Cuba and Mexican investors. I am soon going to take a trade mission there. In tourism, they are offering us the best of Varadero, which is one of the best beaches. Do not think it has been easy to persuade Mexican businessmen. Some of them are afraid of even going to Cuba, not to mention doing business there. But some have already agreed."

[Jaques] In an interview with EL PORVENIR, you said Mexican businessmen will invest in banking in Cuba. Who are these potential investors?

[Garza] People in the Mexican banking system. They are conducting their own private analyses; I can not speak for them. But I can say that the national board of one bank has approved investing in Cuba; they will open a branch there. Nor am I authorized to give you the names of the businessmen who will invest in tourism.

[Jaques] Are they afraid of the reactions, especially from the U.S. Government and anti-Castro people in Miami?

[Garza] There are still some fears. In my case, I honestly have had no problems. I know there was some feeling against this, but I had no problem. People from the U.S. consulate in Monterrey came to see me; I told them what we are doing in Cuba, and that was all. Investing in Cuba is not an affront to the United States. U.S. laws are for North Americans; Mexican laws for Mexicans. We are very definite about that point.

"Many countries are now going into Cuba who before did not do so out of respect for the United States, and they do not have to comply with extraterritorial laws, like the Torricelli. This flow of foreign capital into Cuba will soon generate a real boom. Expectations are enormous. Some 100 trade missions go to Cuba every week; the hotels are crammed. The only people still hanging back are the North Americans; and the more they lag behind, the fewer opportunities they will find."

On the Cubans' willingness, he cites a document entitled: "Possible Association Targets For Foreign Enterprises," prepared by the CECE. It lists fields in which there is interest in associations, the infrastructure available, restrictions, investment costs, and the desirable contribution on the part of the foreign partner, in most cases financing, technology, machinery, and raw materials.

Cuba is interested in forming associations to produce and sell citrus fruits, agricultural machinery, construction equipment, industrial equipment, stainless steel technology equipment, printing and writing paper, and glass packaging. They also are interested in refining crude and selling the resulting products, and in exploration and production—with a risk venture clause—of potential oilfields.

Cuba is also interested in forming associations with foreigners to produce sugar. According to the CECE document, the "Manuel Martinez Prieto," "Abraham Lincoln," "George Washington, "Chiquitico Fabregat," Quintin Banderas," "Ecuador," "Ignacio Agramonte," and "Argentina" mills are available for foreign investment.

With all the sugar refineries, the "foreign partner's desirable contribution" is related to financing and machinery and equipment. "Investments are needed to boost production capacity to a minimum of 90 percent and refining capacity to 100 percent of the crude sugar produced during the sugarcane harvest."

The pamphlet "Possibilities for Joint Business Ventures in Cuba," prepared by the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, chaired by Fidel Castro, lists the laws and resolutions in effect in March 1991 on joint business ventures and economic associations, as a source of basic information and advice concerning such activities.

The pamphlet states that "in order to expand exports and international tourism, Cuba has decided to promote the establishment of economic associations with foreign groups with marketing potential, production experience, and financial resources that will complement those of the Cuban partner. The Cuban organizations have specific ideas to offer their potential foreign partner, and of course, they are also prepared to analyze their suggestions."

These joint enterprises, notes the pamphlet, "may be carried out by other forms of association that do not entail establishing a company. The joint enterprises that are established will have the form of a corporation with registered shares. As a general rule, the foreign participation may be 49 percent of the shares, but in some cases it may even be larger."

On labor relations, "two issues merit attention: the recognized social stability prevailing in Cuba, and the nation's extensive educational system.... In addition, the decree-law on economic associations has established mechanisms to guarantee that discipline and production objectives are met in joint enterprises, in accordance with Cuba's current labor legislation."

As soon as the joint enterprise has determined the size of its work force, says the pamphlet, "a Cuban state entity, through an overall contract between the two parties, will supply a pool of workers from which the enterprise will select its staff. This Cuban entity will then sign individual contracts with each of these workers and the management of the joint enterprise, covering relations with the Cuban party for the purpose of payment of wages and the other benefits to which they are entitled."

The joint enterprise "may request that the Cuban employment entity replace a worker in the event of lack of discipline or productivity. The Cuban employer will assume responsibility for payment of salaries and other rights and benefits to a worker who for any reason ceases to provide services to the joint enterprise, including compensation provided by the appropriate authorities."

The Cuban personnel will be paid the officially established salaries "which—primarily because of the benefits in terms of public health, education, culture, sports, housing, city services, etc.—in general are lower than in other countries where the worker must pay for these items from his own monetary resources."

The tax system provided in the decree-law on economic associations "is certainly attractive," says the pamphlet. "No taxes will be paid on gross revenues of businesses, stock dividends, or on the personal incomes of their specialists and executives. Net profits will be taxed at 30 percent, but the State Finance Committee is authorized to grant temporary exemptions on the basis of the national interest of the company in question. This will also be done for customs duties."

"There is an intention to grant exemptions to companies, especially during their startup phase, based on a careful analysis."

Costa Rica

Reportage on Kidnapping of Justices 26 Apr

Presidency Confirms Kidnapping

PA2604222393 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 2204 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] The Presidency has confirmed the kidnapping of 19 justices and the secretary general of the Plenary Court. A cabinet meeting will be held in a few minutes at the Presidency to review the grave situation in the wake of the kidnapping of 19 justices of the Plenary Court, as well as its secretary general. The only justices who were not present at the time of the kidnapping were Luis Paulino Mora, who currently is in El Salvador, and Luis Arjedas and Ricardo Zeledon Zeledon, who arrived late for the Plenary Court session.

'Death Commando Unit' Holds Justices

PA2604224093 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 2208 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] The police have evacuated the buildings that house most of the judicial offices in San Jose after an alleged terrorist commando unit kidnapped 19 members of the Supreme Court of Justice.

The terrorist group, which according to several sources calls itself the Death Commando Unit [Comando la Muerte], at 1430 [2030 GMT] on 26 April kidnapped 19 magistrates and the court secretary general.

The authorities have not yet reported how many people make up the alleged terrorist commando unit or what their demands are.

Public Security Minister Luis Fishman and Judicial Investigation Agency Director Rafael Angel Guillen are holding a meeting due to the seriousness of this development at the Supreme Court of Justice. The cabinet was also summoned to an urgent meeting at the presidency to discuss this situation.

This Death Commando Unit was unknown until this kidnapping in Costa Rica. It is presumed the commando unit is made up of foreigners and that they could be linked to a drug trafficking trial.

Identity of Hostage Magistrates Reported

PA2604231693 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 2231 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] The demands of the Death Commando Unit are not known officially. It has been speculated that they are demanding the cancellation of a pending civil trial, the details of which are unknown. The following is a list of the Supreme Court of Justice magistrates who were kidnapped by the so-called Death Commando Unit:

Court President Edgar Cervantes Villalta;
Ricardo Zamora Carbajal;
Hugo Picado Odio;
Rodrigo Montenegro Trejos;
Ricardo Zeledon Zeledon, who was not kidnapped because he arrived late to the plenary session;
Orlando Aguirre Gomez;
Jose Luis Arce Soto;
Zariela Villanueva Monge;
Alvaro Fernandez Silva, who has been gagged and tied to a chair according to Presidency reports;
Dr. Jorge Rojas Sanchez;
Dr. Daniel Gonzalez Alvarez;
Dr. (Mario Fut Vega);
Jesus Ramirez Quiros;
Rodrigo Castro Monge;
and Alfonso Chavez Ramirez.

Other Supreme Court of Justice magistrates who have been held hostage since 1430 by the Death Commando Unit on the second floor of the court building are:

Dr. Luis Paulino Mora Mora;
Ana Virginia Calzada Miranda;
Bernal Aragon;
Carlos Arguedas Ramirez, who was not kidnapped either because he also arrived late;
Dr. (Rodolfo Piza Escalante), who according to our colleague Bernie Vasquez was seen outside the court building but according to Legislative Assembly sources is actually among the hostages;
Jorge Castro Bolanos;
Luis Fernando Solano Carrera;
and Eduardo Sancho Gonzalez.

That was the list of the magistrates kidnapped by the Death Commando Unit.

Judicial Official Talks With Kidnappers

PA2704003393 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 2347 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Telephone report by Gina Valdez from the Public Security Ministry in San Jose—live]

[Text] We are reporting from the Public Security Ministry. Rafael Angel Guillen, director of the Judicial Investigation Agency, just entered the building. He was bringing very important information to the Crisis Commission.

In a brief interview before he entered Minister Luis Fishman's office, we asked Guillen if he had talked with the kidnappers and he said yes. He did not report the matters he discussed with them because he was on his way to give a report to the Crisis Commission first.

Thus, the four kidnappers have already established contact with our country's police organizations.

Guillen stated that the magistrate who reported that they were being held hostage was Edgar Cervantes.

We tried to get information about threats or demands made but Guillen said he will make statements to the

media later on. However, he did concede that he talked with the kidnappers directly. We asked him about their nationality, but he did not give us any more information. He did not deny that he has spoken with the kidnappers who are inside the Supreme Court building.

Guillen is now meeting with the Crisis Commission and with Fishman's advisers to tell them about the kidnappers' demands.

Kidnappers Request Radio, TV

PA2704005093 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0000 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Report by Norma Umana—live]

[Text] In their first contact with Costa Rican authorities, the terrorist commando unit, which kidnapped 20 Supreme Court of Justice magistrates and three officials on 26 April, has asked that power and water services and telephone lines not be cut off. A police spokesman said the kidnappers asked that their water, power, and telephone not be cut off and requested a television and radio to monitor reports on their actions. He also stated that the group did not identify itself or reveal its demands, but pointed out that it could be made up of Colombians or Peruvians. A government crisis committee consisting of Security Minister Luis Fishman, Presidency Minister Rolando Lacle, and Attorney General Jose Maria Tijerino is in permanent session and is heading the operation.

Kidnappers Propose Swap for Traffickers

PA2704005593 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0035 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Text] San Jose, 26 Apr (NOTIMEX)—According to a local radio station, the so-called "Death Command Unit" on 26 April proposed the exchange of the kidnapped Supreme Court magistrates for Colombian drug traffickers imprisoned in Costa Rica. Radio Monumental reported that the armed commando unit that occupied the Supreme Court on the afternoon of 26 April is made up of four armed Colombians. There are 17 [figure as received] Supreme Court magistrates and a yet to be determined number of civilians being held hostage inside the building. The Costa Rican Government's Crisis Committee, made up of Public Security Minister Luis Fishman, Presidency Minister Rolando Lacle, and Foreign Minister Bernd Niehaus, began an emergency meeting to analyze the situation.

Reporter Says Caller Warned About Kidnapping

PA2704011693 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0009 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Report by Gina Valdes from the Public Security Ministry—live]

[Text] I have new information from the Public Security Ministry. There is an interesting new development. Several days ago, reporter (Greibi Moya) of Channel 7 received several anonymous telephone calls from an individual telling him that Supreme Court of Justice magistrates would be kidnapped in the next few days. They said another aim was to rob a bank that is located inside the court building; there is a branch of the Bank of Costa Rica.

Reporter (Greibi Moya) gave little credibility to these calls because the callers never identified themselves or gave other details. Thus, he thought it was a joke because many people often pull this type of prank. The kidnapping that the informant warned of actually took place at the Supreme Court on 26 April.

(Greibi Moya), in his reporter capacity, met with Public Security Minister Luis Fishman to advise him of this incident, which he had even mentioned to his colleagues. They did no share this with the authorities because they thought it was a joke.

We also learned that the first demand of the kidnappers was for a television and a radio to monitor what the media are reporting about this situation. (Greibi Moya) said he managed to overhear at the crisis meeting—because he entered the office—that a 10-minute deadline was given to comply with the demand. Those 10 minutes expired a long time ago. It is not known why such a short deadline of 10 minutes was given to bring a television and a radio to the Supreme Court building.

Thus, one of the aims of this kidnapping could be to steal the money contained in the vaults of the branch of the Bank of Costa Rica, which is located inside the Supreme Court building.

Official Confirms Kidnappers Colombian

PA2704011993 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0050 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Telephone report by Gina Valdez from the Public Security Ministry in San Jose—live]

[Text] There will be a news conference in a few minutes. The Crisis Commission will give a complete report on what has happened on 26 April at the Supreme Court, where several magistrates are being held hostage. A ranking Civil Guard official confirmed the nationality of the kidnappers. They are four Colombians. Apparently, this is unofficial information: They demand the release of several prisoners who are in La Reforma and San Sebastian jails. They are Colombians linked with drug trafficking.

Official Confirms Contacts With Kidnappers

PA2704030593 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0130 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Telephone interview with Rafael Brenes, deputy director of the Judicial Investigation Agency, by unidentified station announcer—live]

[Text] [Announcer] How much contact have you had with the group of kidnappers?

[Brenes] We have received several calls through an OIJ [Judicial Investigation Agency] officer assigned to maintain direct contact with them. So far we have received approximately four or five calls demanding a TV set, a radio, and other minor things. We have been told that apparently they will present their list of demands at approximately 2100 [0300 GMT 27 April]. We do not really know what they want yet.

[Announcer] Has the number of kidnappers been confirmed? In the beginning it was said there were two, then four, and now there is another version saying there are 18, consisting of a group that entered in a vehicle through the basement, and others that were already inside the building. What is the official version?

[Brenes] We have not confirmed those reports. As far as we know, there are four. We do not have any other information.

[Announcer] With regard to reports linking them to drug traffickers, is there any official confirmation of this?

[Brenes] No. We have no information on that either. They simply identified themselves as the Death Commando Unit, that's all. We do not have any names yet. We are investigating and trying to identify them.

[Announcer] Is this Death Commando a totally unknown group, or have you heard that name before?

[Brenes] This is the first time we've heard of them.

[Announcer] We understand that you also want to send a message to all litigant lawyers and employees of the Supreme Court of Justice. You may deliver your message.

[Brenes] In view of the serious emergency we are currently facing, we are suspending all activities at the San Jose Judicial Circuit, in other words in the three buildings, tentatively on 27 April. Therefore, all employees, except for emergency services, such as the morgue and the OIJ, will be off tomorrow. The workers of all the courts located in the three buildings and administrative personnel should not report to work tomorrow until further notice.

[Announcer] Some people who work in buildings near the Supreme Court of Justice are also worried. Will they be able to pass?

[Brenes] For the time being, the area surrounding the three buildings where the Judicial District operates will be blocked. There will be no access to the area. It is important for the public to know this. No traffic will be allowed on 6th and 8th Avenues during the crisis.

Fishman Rejects Request for Personal Meeting

PA2704040893 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0323 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Report by Gina Valdes from the Government and Public Security Building in San Jose—live]

[Text] Foreign Minister Bern Niehaus talked to reporters a few minutes ago regarding the hostage situation at the Supreme Court building where four individuals have held the magistrates hostage for the past eight hours. Foreign Minister Niehaus told the media the authorities made brief contact with the kidnappers. The chief negotiator of the Crisis Commission that is holding talks with the self-styled Death Commando Unit has had little contact with them.

The real reasons behind the captors' actions have not been disclosed. As we reported earlier, the captors have just asked for a TV set, a radio, and other minor things. The real demands have not been divulged yet. The kidnappers told the Crisis Commission members they had a list of demands, which was going to be made public at 2100 [0300 GMT on 27 April], but that time is up and they have not yet issued a communique detailing their motives and demands before releasing their hostages.

As an interesting note, the captors asked Government and Public Security Minister Luis Fishman to meet them at the Supreme Court Building. Of course, Fishman did not accept the request to go there and hold the negotiations in person. The official told the captors he was going to conduct the talks right here, together with the other Crisis Commission members. That is what the foreign minister said. He also said the nationalities of the captors and their true intentions are not known yet.

Kidnappers Provide List of Demands

PA2704051993 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0448 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Report by unidentified reporter from the Public Security Ministry in San Jose—live]

[Text] The Crisis Committee members are on their way to the Presidency of the Republic to inform President Rafael Angel Calderon Fournier about the list of demands that have been sent from the Supreme Court of Justice.

The list of demands has been sent by the kidnappers, the four individuals who are keeping as hostages a group of 20 persons, most of them magistrates of the Supreme Court.

Neither Minister of the Presidency Rolando Lacle Castro nor Public Security Minister Luis Fishman has commented on what the demands are for the release of the hostages.

They will first report to the president of the Republic, and therefore they have left in a vehicle for the Presidency. Other members of the Crisis Committee remain here.

Foreign Minister Bernd Niehaus, Minister of the Presidency Roland Lacle Castro, and Public Security Minister Luis Fishman have left for the presidency. Fishman is carrying a manila envelope with the list of demands.

There is speculation as to who the captors are. It is said they are Colombians, members of the Cali Cartel, and that they are asking for the release from prison of Luis Armando Mola, (Carlos Alberto Urquijo), and Raul Eduardo Alvarez in exchange for the magistrates. Those three individuals, who are charged with narcotics trafficking and money laundering, were arrested on 27 September 1992 in an international Operation Green Ice.

This is all speculation; it has not been confirmed officially. Once the president of the Republic has received the report on the list of the demands made by the kidnappers, these officials will probably return here to the Public Security Ministry to provide the information to the media, and then we will immediately announce it to our listeners.

Ministers Meet With President

PA2704062193 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0536 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Report by William Cespedes from the Presidency of the Republic—live]

[Text] President Rafael Angel Calderon Fournier is meeting here at the Presidential Palace with the members of the Crisis Commission. Presidency Minister Rolando Lacle, Public Security Minister Luis Fishman, and Judicial Investigation Agency Director Rafael Guillen are meeting with the president, giving him details about the negotiations that have been conducted in recent hours with the members of the Death Commando who have taken 20 magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice as hostages.

The government has been closely following this situation throughout the day and evening hours. The president and several of his ministers are meeting at the presidential office, and they are analyzing the demands that have not been disclosed yet to the media. Nonetheless, unofficial versions say that this situation is linked to international narcotics trafficking.

President Calderon and the members of his cabinet are analyzing these demands, which were brought in by the Commission members who have been in contact with the members of the Death Commando who since 1330 [as heard] have been holding 20 members of the Supreme Court and other Judicial Branch officials as hostages at the Supreme Court of Justice building. President Calderon has not made any statements to the media in view of the seriousness of the situation.

As we reported earlier, members of the National Liberation Party who are deputies of the Legislative Assembly have arrived at the Presidential Palace. These include the incoming and outgoing wing leaders, Hugo Alfonso Munoz and Federico Vargas Peralta, as well as incoming Legislative Assembly President Danilo Echaverri and other government officials.

Most of the ministers remain in their offices in a permanent, emergency meeting of the Government Council. President Calderon Fournier and his ministers might issue an official communique within a few minutes on the actions that would be implemented to comply with or to reject the demands of the armed commando group members for the release of the Supreme Court magistrates.

The situation here is very tense, not much is being said, and there are strict security measures around the Presidential Palace.

Kidnappers' Demands Reported

PA2704064593 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0556 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Telephone report by William Cespedes from the Presidency in San Jose—live]

[Text] The members of the self-styled Death Commando Unit who kidnapped 20 Supreme Court justices have made three basic demands: the payment of $20 million; free transit to a South American country; and the release from jail of a group of prisoners who are currently in Costa Rican jails, apparently linked with drug trafficking. The list of prisoners has not been delivered yet.

Those are the three points. Once the first two demands are met, the kidnappers reportedly will deliver the list. A deadline of 27 April was given to comply with the demands.

The government is currently reviewing the situation, and at the Government Council to be held on 27 April it will decide the measures to be taken to reply to the demands.

For the time being, Presidency Minister Rolando Lacle Castro said he has no comments regarding the demands. As for the $20 million, it is believed the sum requested is beyond the Costa Rican Government's ability to provide. As for the list of prisoners apparently linked to international drug trafficking, their identities are still unknown, and so it is hard to know what the government's decision will be.

Minister Lacle, with Government and Security Minister Luis Fishman and Judicial Investigation Agency Director Rafael Angel Guillen, delivered the list of demands to President Calderon, who is currently

meeting in his office with several ministers, waiting for the outcome of this situation.

The hostages are currently in good health. As previously reported, Dr. Fernando Garzona entered the building carrying medicines.

The situation will remain as it is now, until a decision is made at the Government Council on 27 April.

This is what Presidency Minister Rolando Lacle said:

[Begin recording] [Lacle, in progress] ...the reports we have are [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Mr. Minister [words indistinct]?

[Lacle] They said they want a reply on 27 April, but we will analyze carefully their demands on 27 April. [end recording]

The authorities do not wish to reveal or do not know the identity of the Death Commando Unit members. Presidency Minister Rolando Lacle said the identity of the four Death Commando Unit members is unknown. He said their other conditions are also unknown. Lacle added they threatened to take drastic measures should those three demands not be fulfilled: [Begin Lacle recording] The kidnappers made three main demands. First, they want us to guarantee them the possibility of free transit to a South American country; second, they want $20 million; and third, they said as soon as those two demands are met—that is, that they receive the guarantee that enables them to leave freely for a South American country and the $20 million—they would supply a list of prisoners, who are currently in the hands of Costa Rican authorities, they want freed. [end recording]

That was the presidency minister commenting on the demands of the Death Commando Unit members who at 1330 on 26 April kidnapped some 14 members [number as heard] of the Supreme Court plenum, several administrative employees of the Judicial Branch, and the court secretary.

The government of the Republic will analyze this situation and will make a decision at a Government Council meeting on 27 April.

Minister Lacle Discusses Crisis

PA2704135593 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1228 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Telephone interview with Rolando Lacle, Costa Rican presidency minister, in San Jose, Costa Rica, by unidentified reporters in Santa Fe de Bogota—live]

[Text] [Announcer] We have Rolando Lacle, Costa Rican presidency minister, on the line. He wants to send a message to the kidnappers through the radio operator identified as Sonia. Mr. Minister, welcome to Caracol. We are listening to you throughout the continent. Go ahead, Mr. Minister Ronaldo Lacle.

[Reporter] The kidnappers are requesting to establish direct contact with the president of the Republic, but the president has not yet communicated with the kidnappers. We have the minister on line. Good morning, Mr. Minister.

[Lacle] Good morning.

[Reporter] What is the attitude of the government regarding the demands by the four-people commando that has kidnapped 19 justices and five other people?

[Lacle] On the evening of 26 April we [words indistinct] the demands of the kidnappers of the Supreme Court justices and we decided to [words indistinct] in a Government Council, which will analyze these requests and will establish the Costa Rican Government's strategy in view of this action that has evidently shocked public opinion. This is an unprecedented action in Costa Rica, which may prompt the government to take some actions during the course of the day.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister Lacle, radio operator Sonia, who is at this moment on the first floor of the Supreme Court building, has said that the commando is demanding to talk to the president of the Republic. Will this be possible later on?

[Lacle] The president is being informed by the ministers who are handling this crisis situation faced by the Government of Costa Rica. For now, we have decided to maintain communication with the kidnappers using the same channels used on 26 April.

[Reporter] Minister Lacle, how many Colombian citizens are currently under arrest in Costa Rica on charges of drug trafficking?

[Lacle] We have no idea at this time if the kidnappers are Colombians or not.

[Reporter] But do you know how many Colombians are under arrest in Costa Rica?

[Lacle] There are more than 20 Colombian citizens in Costa Rican jails for drug trafficking. I insist that we do not have information from the kidnappers or anyone else that they are demanding the liberation of any Colombian citizen. The list that they announced on 26 April has not yet been disclosed [words indistinct] liberated persons. We do not know for sure if there is a Colombian among the kidnappers.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, is any of these Colombians being processed at this time and is the United States requesting their extradition?

[Lacle] No. At this time I am not aware of any person whose extradition is being requested by the United States. I obviously do not handle that government area; it is handled by the justice minister. I have information that no extradition request has been filed.

I think that for now we should wait for the day to go on so that the demands of kidnappers are specified. This will permit the Government Council to adopt whatever decisions it will have to make to get a clearer picture of the whole situation.

Basically the media reports on the alleged demand for the liberation of Colombian citizens or persons connected with drug trafficking are not true or confirmed reports. We have to wait a little longer [words indistinct] to have a clearer picture of the demands of the kidnappers [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Minister, what details does the government have on how these four people entered the Supreme Court building and why did they carry this out so easily?

[Lacle] Obviously, I could not answer that question. You must understand that many of these details should still be kept secret. The government has all the information and details, but this is obviously not the right time to speak about that.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, is it true that the kidnappers requested to establish direct telephone contact with Colombia?

[Lacle] No, that is not true.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, what is the official information the government has on the demands of the kidnappers?

[Lacle] The demands of the kidnappers [words indistinct] freedom of transit to any South American country, where they can travel. They demanded that the Costa Rican Government give them $20 million. After these two demands have been met—namely free passage to South America and the delivery of $20 million—they will prepare a list of persons arrested in Costa Rica so that they can be liberated. These are the official demands made by the kidnappers.

[Reporter] According to the initial reports, the kidnappers asked that the water, telephone, and energy services not be cut off and that they be provided with a television set, a radio, and food. Mr. Minister, how much food did you send them?

[Lacle] We only sent them food for the evening of 26 April. We sent them some sandwiches. That is all we have sent them for now.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, international news agencies are citing kidnappers as demanding the release of four people. Let us see if you can recall some of them. They are Luis Armando Mola, Carlos Alberto Urquijo, Raul Eduardo Alvarez, and [name indistinct], would be the first four people whose liberation is requested by the kidnappers.

[Lacle] I insist that we have not received an official list of names from kidnappers. They stated that after their first two demands are met—namely to travel to a South American country where they can move about freely, and the delivery of a $20 million payment—they will give the list of names.

On the evening of 26 April, I heard the family of Mr. Urquijo on television express clearly that he was not ready to [words indistinct] commando or leave jail, thus denying any connection with this incident.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, as the Government of Costa Rica has not asked the kidnappers to surrender, can it be assumed that the government is going to negotiate with kidnappers or will it ask the kidnappers to surrender today, 27 April?

[Lacle] A decision will be made during the Government Council on the morning of 27 April.

[Reporter] What guarantees will you offer to the members of the commando unit that kidnapped the justices, in case they agree to surrender?

[Lacle] None.

[Reporter] None?

[Lacle] None for the time being. We have to wait for the decision of the Government Council. We will not act unilaterally, but we will wait for a decision of the Government Council.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, do you think the way in which your government resolved the takeover of the Nicaraguan Embassy in San Jose, Costa Rica, a few months ago has anything to do with this new takeover of the Supreme Court?

[Lacle] No. I think they are completely different cases.

[Reporter] In other words, Mr. Minister, did the fact that the Government of Costa Rica did not react strongly enough to the Nicaraguan Embassy incident cause this new takeover?

[Lacle] You should keep in mind that the case of the Nicaraguan Embassy takeover involved another government and totally different circumstances.

[Reporter] Minister, have you made contact with the Government of Colombia?

[Lacle] No. We have no reason to do so, unless there is a Colombian citizen among the kidnappers. For the time being, there is no justification to contact the Colombian Government. [Words indistinct] we maintain cordial relations with the Government of Colombia, but we must wait for the day to progress. If I have further information during the next few hours, I will be glad to share it with you.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, did the buildings located in the so-called judicial circuit of San Jose have enough surveillance? Also, did the fact that San Jose is such a quiet city and Costa Rica such a civilized country, where not even an Army exists, facilitate the operation of the commando

unit? [pause] We have lost contact with Rolando Lacle, Costa Rican presidency minister.

Public Security Chief on Situation

PA2704140793 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1256 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Report by Mitzi Madrigal]

[Text] This is a report from the Supreme Court of Justice. Colonel Marino Donato, chief of the Costa Rican Public Force, has said there are three ill people on the second floor where all of the magistrates, who were taken hostage by four people at about 1350 [1930 GMT] on 26 April, are being held. One of the ill persons is Alvaro Fernandez Silva. The number of sick people was confirmed by Fernando Garzona, who entered the premises at 0015 on 27 April for the second time to take care of the ill people inside. It has been reported that 10 members of the Special Support Police [PEA] and the Judicial Investigations Police [OIJ] entered the building early in the morning and are in the basement. No one can go upstairs to the second floor. Col. Donato reports on the situation.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter, in progress]...are stationed at approximately 354 meters, too far away from the building.

[Donato] Approximately 200, but I can move the first security ring closer.

[Reporter] There are more people here than planned.

[Donato] Yes, you are right, but people must go to work. In addition, we have to deal with the traffic jam that usually occurs on these streets. We cannot help it for the time being.

[Reporter] What is the new situation at the Supreme Court building?

[Donato] Just like any other day. I have just recommended that the media should cooperate a little more with us. The people in the building monitor every movement we make out here. This makes the movement of our people difficult, although we have no special plans.

[Reporter] What is the work of the PEA, the Intelligence and Security Directorate [DIS], and the OIJ? What does the public security minister recommend?

[Donato] PEA and DIS are participating in the operation. OIJ, Civil Police, and patrol cars have cordoned off the area to maintain a certain degree of security for the pedestrians in case anything unpredictable happens.

[Reporter] What are the instructions from the higher security authorities?

[Donato] Keep the area cordoned off, bar the passage of vehicles and pedestrians in a 100 meters radius. [end recording]

El Salvador

Human Rights Groups Protest Suspension of OAS Visit

PA2604043593 San Salvador DIARIO LATINO in Spanish 23 Apr 93 p 7

[Text] Five Salvadoran human rights organizations and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, FMLN, on 23 April criticized the government for unilaterally suspending a visit of a delegation from the OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission scheduled for 26 April.

The "Monsignor Romero Committee of Mothers and Relatives of Political Prisoners, Missing, and Murdered People in El Salvador, Co-Madres; the Marianella Garcia Villas" Committee of Relatives of Murdered and Missing People and in Favor of the Release of Political Prisoners in El Salvador, Codefam; the "Madeleine Lagadec" Center for the Promotion of Human Rights [Centro para la Promocion de los Derechos Humanos Madeleine Lagadec]; the Christian Committee for the Displaced Persons of El Salvador (Cripdes); and the nongovernmental Salvadoran Human Rights Commission (CDHES) described the government's attitude as "irresponsible" and "regrettable," as it violates previous commitments.

CDHES Representative Celia Medrano said the government planned the 28 to 29 April meeting five years ago. She added that the visit was suspended because the government violated the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights by approving the Amnesty Law.

Codefam Representative Mauricio Martinez said the government is trying to hide violations of human rights, because as recently as in April the bodies of 15 persons murdered in the same style used by the death squads have been discovered.

Sigfrido Reyes, representative of the FMLN Foreign Relations Commission, said the government's decision is an attempt to conceal the systematic violations of human rights that still exist in the country, and the abuse of authority of government institutions, among other violations.

According to Reyes, the government is committed to cooperate with the OAS Human Rights Commission to verify the situation of human rights in the country with the signing of the peace agreements.

Reyes said the government's attitude violates previous commitments and contradicts its expressions of goodwill and cooperation toward that commission.

The OAS Human Rights Commission will meet in June to prepare its annual report on human rights.

Defense Minister Criticizes Truth Commission Report

PA2604015393 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 24 Apr 92 p 5

[Text] The Truth Commission only emphasized accusations against Armed Forces officers and did not investigate all serious acts of violence, as it was expected to do, Defense Minister General Rene Emilio Ponce said on 23 April.

Gen. Ponce delivered a speech during a luncheon meeting at El Camino Real Hotel, at the invitation of the American Chamber of Commerce of El Salvador.

Ponce spoke about the impact that the Truth Commission report has had on the country. He said that 15 days before the report was published, the military institution noted that the National Defense Ministry had the ethical obligation to confirm that the report actually contained the truth about what occurred in El Salvador with justice and equity.

Unfortunately, he added, after reviewing the Truth Commission Report, the contrary was confirmed, as serious violations to international humanitarian laws committed by the rebels were not included, possibly because the sources used were prejudiced. The Truth Commission highlighted accusations made against Armed Forces officials for alleged violations of human rights and did not investigate serious acts of violence, he stressed.

Fortunately, he said, the Armed Forces, like most Salvadorans, are aware of the many barbaric actions committed during the conflict. Therefore, he said, on 5 October 1992 it presented to the president of the Truth Commission a basic document with the pertinent information on serious acts of violence of utmost importance committed by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front that caused social commotion. In conclusion, he said, the Truth Commission surpassed its limits.

Nicaragua

Humberto Ortega on Roles of Army, Police

PA2604171493 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1230 GMT 25 Apr 93

["Excerpt" of speech by General Humberto Ortega to political forum at the Olof Palme Convention Center in Managua; date not given—recorded]

[Text] With regard to the Sandinist People's Army's [EPS] name, which was mentioned in the document [reference to the report by the National Democratic Institute, DNI, on the situation in Nicaragua], we do not think it is really a problem. [Augusto Cesar] Sandino is a patriarch of the whole nation, not just of the Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN]. The president has said that Sandino was Pedro Joaquin Chamorro's model, but it is not an insurmountable problem if we have to change the EPS' name. In any case, if the name must be changed it must be done within the framework of the constitutional reforms that must carried out in order to improve the Constitution rather than negate it. I personally believe the name National Army for the Defense of the National Sovereignty, as Sandino called his Army, could be an alternative.

Point three deals with the military law someone has been insistently trying to impose since 1992. I think the law is illegal...[pauses] in fact, it is only a document, but people have assumed it is a law. I agree that the military bill should be discussed at the National Assembly plenum with the participation of the National Opposition Union and FSLN deputies. Future bills will perfect reforms to the law that are currently viable.

Referring to the roles of the Police and Army, I want to tell you gentlemen that this issue has been duly outlined. I do not know why the issue is not clearly stated in the document. The police force is now under the Government Ministry, and the Information Directorate for Defense [DID] is the only agency left under the Army's authority after the Interior Ministry was dissolved, but that has been fully detailed. Furthermore, we must point out that the government decides what missions will be carried out by the Army and the DID. The government knows everything about the intelligence agency's activities. We have not carried out any activities other than those conducted by the DID.

Regarding military officers' retirement, time in service, and so forth, the military law we are [words indistinct] reforms to the current law include retirement and time in service for officers and commanders. All this is based on the military career law required in every Army, and my retirement is not contemplated [words indistinct] there is no problem.

We agree on the need to train civilians in military issues. I think it is important. I believe it is important to invest in centers and lectures on military studies and university plans as the document states. The Army has placed trained personnel, high-ranking military officers, and retired military officers at the institute's disposal. Those individuals can help teach other groups in our society the necessities in terms of defense and military issues. We place our capabilities at your disposal.

Honduran Navy Commander Comments on Fishing Conflict

PA2604181993 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] The Honduran Navy commanding general has said that a conflict could break out between Honduras and Nicaragua if the Nicaraguan Navy continues to capture and open fire on Honduran fishing boats. Here is a report by Carol Munguia from Chinandega.

[Begin Mungia recording] The Nicaraguan Navy released 32 Honduran fishermen on 23 April. The fishermen had been captured while fishing in waters along the Nicaraguan border. Five Salvadoran fishermen have also been released. The Honduran fishermen were turned over to Maria Barahona, the Honduran consul in Chinandega. They were received at 1900 at the Guasaule customs point by immigration authorities and by the president of the Honduran Chamber of Commerce, who helped the fishermen return to their homes.

We have learned that Colonel Bruno Fontana, commanding general of the Honduran Navy, has charged that Nicaraguan Navy boats have become pirates in the Gulf of Fonseca to the point that they open fire on Honduran fishing boats. Col. Fontana said he spoke with Manuel Rivas Guatemala, chief of the Sandinist Navy, on 20 May. The Sandinist Navy chief promised to return the captured fishing boats. It was quite a surprise to him, however, to learn that the fishermen had been fined more than $350.

Nicaraguan authorities have been advised of the possibility of a conflict between the neighboring countries. Col. Fontana said that if Nicaraguans open fire on Honduran fishermen, the Hondurans will return the fire. [end recording]

Panama

Five Persons Arrested for Terrorist Attack

PA2604194093 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 26 Apr 93 p 1

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] Five persons were arrested in connection with the failed terrorist attack on 23 April in Boquete, which—according to the preliminary investigations—was part of an alleged conspiracy to assassinate President Guillermo Endara and Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, Arnulfist Party [PA] president.

A source from the PA told EL PANAMA AMERICA that three of the five arrested persons claim individuals close to a retired National Police officer are involved in the plan. Spokesmen for the Attorney General's Office, however, have told this newspaper that no arrests have been made.

The Attorney General's Office in Chiriqui Province opened two cases regarding—the now deceased—Gabriel Aguirre Guerra's, private of the National Police and former member of the Special Antiterror Service Unit (UESAT), attempt.

Prosecutor Felix Perez opened a case for an attack against the state and Boquete Municipal Attorney Arturo Paniza opened an investigation into the cause of the death of former UESAT member Gabriel Aguirre, who died when an explosive he intended to place at the headquarters of the Arnulfist Convention exploded prematurely.

On 25 April Perez searched three houses Aguirre had in David and Progreso in Chiriqui Province. A large amount of explosives was found in one of the houses.

PA spokesmen disclosed that bank deposit slips for almost $4,000 for accounts at the Banco Del Istmo and Caja De Ahorros Bank were found in the former UESAT member's clothes.

On 25 April investigators found two ribs that belonged to Private Aguirre, whose body was split in two when the explosive, which was meant for the PA members, exploded.

Forensic doctors performed an autopsy on Gabriel Aguirre and a video of the autopsy was given to President Guillermo Endara.

According to reports from PA members, Aguirre was chosen to carry out the attack because he knew Boquete well since he was married for some years to a young woman from that district, whom he later left.

Gabriel Aguirre served at the National Police headquarters in David. In the past, he formed part of the UESAT, the elite corps created on 6 June 1980 by the former National Guard to fight terrorism and support the security of that military institution's commander in chief.

This is the second time former UESAT members were linked to terrorist activities in Chiriqui. In August 1990, a Public Force sergeant and private, who formed part of that specialized unit, were accused of placing bombs at Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification installations in Querevalos, Valbuena, and Las Lomas.

Prior to the Boquete case, two institutions under the control of members of the PA National Directory—the Passports Directorate and the Health Ministry—were attacked.

This was also the second alleged conspiracy aimed at eliminating President Guillermo Endara discovered in the last 14 months. In February 1992, the government denounced operation "Assassinate the Fat Guy" [Asesinar al Gordito], for which Eduardo Herrera—who rejects the charges—is under arrest.

On another aspect, PA spokesmen denied the involvement of former deputy minister Miguel Batista in the failed terrorist attack in Boquete, but admitted that he had a heated discussion with Carlos Bares, chief of the Institutional Protection Service (SPI).

The incident took place hours before the attack, when Batista demanded that Bares explain why SPI members were patrolling his house in Boquete.

Through reports gathered in Boquete on 25 April, it was learned that President Endara is being duly informed of

the advances in the investigations, which are being conducted in strict secrecy to prevent any leaks.

The names of the five arrested persons were not disclosed to this newspaper, even though we spoke to different sources in an attempt to obtain them. According to one of these sources, new names could emerge as the investigations continue.

Former Deputy Minister Under Arrest

PA2604194393 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 26 Apr 93 p 48

[From the "The Griper" column]

[Text] It should be known that former Presidency Deputy Minister Miguel Batista was arrested in Boquete following the explosion under a bridge at 2200 on 23 April [0300 GMT 24 April]. Not even Santa Claus believed his alibi. He is under arrest.

Interview With ARI Board Candidate

PA2704061293 Panama City TVN Television Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 25 Apr

["Dialogue" program with Carlos Mendoza, candidate to the Interoceanic Region Authority Board of Directors, and host Luz Maria Noli—recorded]

[Text] [Noli] Good afternoon and welcome to "Dialogue." Here with us today is Dr. Carlos Mendoza, a lawyer, a careful observer of international and local developments, and a politician by definition and passion. He was nominated to become a member of the Board of Directors of the Interoceanic Region Authority [ARI]. Thank you for accepting our invitation and welcome.

From the moment President Guillermo Endara made the announcement of the nine persons who were going to comprise the Board of Directors of what may be the Republic of Panama's most important resource, what has happened? What has been achieved? What progress has been made? What can you tell me?

[Mendoza] What one could have expected has happened. The law is very clear on the matter. President Endara nominated nine persons to make up the ARI Board. The Legislative Assembly was informed of it. The Legislative Assembly, through the Credentials Committee, has been considering those nine names. I would say that regarding those nine appointees, only three of them have been opposed: Mariano Mena, Jose Chong Hon, and I.

Mariano Mena is an extraordinary man. I know him well since he was a permament employee of (Celoprin). He is the young man who was able to move ahead. You know him. He knows how to speak and think, and his attitudes are dignified. Nobody questions his commitment to the working class. As for Jose Chon Hon, he is guilty of an absolutely unforgiveable sin in this country: He is a man of a higher talent, and that offends frustrated, mediocre people.

[Noli] Pardon me for interrupting, I hope I am not fawning, but what can one say about you if all that is true?

[Mendoza] Modesty has never been one of my virtues, and I harbor the hope that it never will be. There are really no grounds for the accusations against Mariano Mena and Chong Hong, and I am certain that the members of the Credentials Committee and the members of the Assembly will see it that way. As far as I am concerned, since I insist that modesty is not one of my characteristics, I will say absolutely nothing about me. [as heard] Now, the Committee will submit a report, which I am certain will be favorable to the full Assembly. The full session will have to approve or reject the appointment of the nine candidates by a two-thirds majority.

Luz Maria, do not ask me to count how many legislators will be necessary to do that. I believe the audience will be amused figuring out how many legislators there are, how many comprise two-thirds.

[Noli] You, however, are holding meetings. What is the purpose of those meetings?

[Mendoza] To kill the monotony of daily Panamanian life!

[Noli] I am sure the nine members are meeting for another purpose. Can you tell us anything about those meetings?

[Mendoza] Obviously, the nine of us cannot do anything formally, because we do not even know if the Assembly is going to confirm us or not. The ARI, Luz Maria, is a very serious issue, and therefore, one cannot improvise. Although our confirmation by the Assembly is pending, we have met, among other things, to have some hors d'oeuvres, and also for more serious purposes. Look, a law was approved: The ARI Law, which can be considered a good law, but it is full of gaps. It must be regulated. In the ARI, one has to play God. We must create something from nothing, or as the theologians say: there will be chaos! We must create internal regulations. Naturally, the ARI needs money, which means we must draft a budget. Deliberately, however, I have kept hidden in my left pocket what perhaps is the most important factor: Should we be confirmed, we will have to appoint the ARI administrator. Pardon me for saying these words so slowly, but if I don't, I will lose my breath.

[Noli] I see.

[Mendoza] This administrator must be a remarkable person.

[Noli] Another extraterrestrial being, right?

[Mendoza] Yes, not ultra, but extra. In addition, as if this were not enough, the law mentions a regional plan, and a general plan. There is work galore. Everything we have done so far is informal. It is like a prep course. Should the legislators—as wise individuals—confirm us, we will put that knowledge to work. If they don't, we will pass it on to our successors.

[Noli] All Panamanians at some time or another have said there is a delay in handling the reverted properties and making decisions on this national patrimony. What is your opinion? Can we recover, or are we hopelessly lost?

[Mendoza] I will paraphrase a man who died at almost 100. Ramon Menendez Pidal. He once defined Spain in a lapidary fashion. He said: Spain, a country of belated fruits. Panama sometimes not only is a country of belated fruits, but of rotten fruits.

[Noli] Dr. Mendoza, if Panama is such a different nation, what can we expect from the PA [Arnulfist Party] Convention, if this can be taken as an initial step prior to the upcoming election campaign.

[Mendoza] Luz Maria: Let us start with the party's name. The name of the party is Arnulfist Party. This means this is an authentic Panamanian party. Why is this? In the first place, since the time of Belisario Porras [former president 1916-1918, 1920] he had already dreamed up some Porras leagues. During the 1940's, when you were not even born, the following terms were used: Panchismo [Francisco Arias Paredes, presidential candidate], Dominguismo [Domingo Diaz, former president], Jimenismo [Enrique Jimenez, former president]. Therefore, Panamanian political life has always been marked by personalization. In the second place, all Panamanian political parties are made up of bits and pieces. Therefore, in theory there are extreme antagonisms [between the parties] that in the end seem to melt away and disappear. I do not believe—I am talking before the convention, trying to visualize what will happen on 24 April [as heard]—that anything special will happen at the PA Convention. There is only one thing worth mentioning, which is the designation of the president of the Republic, not only as a member of the National Directorate Board, but also as sergeant-at-arms of the National Directorate Board. This is something unheard of in Panamanian history.

[Noli] Many of us thought for a moment that President Endara would remove himself from this. Nevertheless, [Immigration Director] Antonio Dominguez explained that one is born, lives, and dies an Arnulfist.

[Mendoza] Besides, this is not the first time that a president of the Republic is a member of a political party directorate board. Ernesto de la Guardia was party president of the National Patriotic Coalition during his administration. One thing is certain though, Ernesto de la Guardia never acted as party president, the one who always acted as party president was our dear Vice President Ricardo Manuel Arias Espinoza.

[Noli] Nevertheless, the PA has decided that a woman, Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, will not only be party president, she will also be the presidential candidate. I must say very candidly Mr. Mendoza, this will not work, at least not here. What do you have to say about this?

[Mendoza] So....[pauses] you are afraid of Panamanian machismo. But, that Panamanian machismo does not really exist, it is a front men here use in an attempt to hide a certain indisputable inferiority. Now, I do not know if Mireya Gruber will be candidate and I do not know if she will be elected. However, Luz Maria, this is possible, this is possible [repeats himself]. You might say: This is not possible. I say to you: Yes, it is possible. I want to make reference to the 1980's. Would anyone have imagined in 1985, 1986, 1987 that Guillermo Endara would be president of the Republic of Panama? [Chuckles] However, no one, no one [repeats himself] that I know denies that my colleague is the president of the Republic.

[Noli] Yes, but....[pauses] I suppose it could be possible, everything is possible. Explain something to me. Suddenly we wake up and we find that we have a bunch of political parties. It seems like they just sprout up, spontaneously. I think we have 22, 23, or maybe 24 parties by now. I lost count. What is your opinion of this proliferation of the political parties?

[Mendoza] [Sighs] They have two fundamental characteristics. On the one hand, they are small monuments—as Alberto Lleras [former Colombian president] called them on one occasion. On the other part—and this truly is dangerous—some of them openly represent the participation of very specific economic interests in Panamanian politics. Therefore, we are not dealing with small monuments to personal interests, rather, we are dealing with something much more dangerous which is the open meddling of certain economic sectors in Panamanian political life. This is not something fundamentally different from what has happened all along in Panamanian history. One can find much of the unwritten Panamanian history in the financing of political campaigns.

[Noli] Do you think that the political campaign will be significantly different than what they have been in the past?

[Mendoza] Why should it be significantly different?

[Noli] I do not know. It just seems that it will be more violent. There are many armed persons. It appears that people are ready to say to each other things that—due to prudence, or respect—they did not dare say previously.

[Mendoza] There is something that bothers me, and it really hurts me. I think that there is no art that producers more intellectual enjoyment than to use insulting words elegantly. However, we Panamanians are no longer capable of insulting each other elegantly. The refined insult, the witty insult, is even more harming than the vulgar insult. But that seems to have disappeared from Panamanian politics. As far as the weapons go, it is true,

there is a large number of weapons spread from one end of the nation to the other. It is very doubtful that anything more than a small percentage of the weapons that Mr. Manuel Antonio Noriega scattered throughout the whole nation were collected. That is dangerous. I hope, I hope, I hope [repeats himself] that we do not become involved in as dirty a campaign as the one in 1968 and as violent as the one in 1968.

[Noli] Here is a topic of current interest: amnesty. What do you think about this?

[Mendoza] It annoys me.

[Noli] Why?

[Mendoza] Because the obvious truths are forgotten. There are some common crimes that cannot be covered by amnesty under any circumstances. Have we forgotten that respectable gentlemen were thrown into prison cells with homosexuals so they would rape them? Have we forgotten that respectable ladies were thrown into cells with lesbians who were encouraged to say they had AIDS? Manuel Antonio Noriega's personality has a facet of sadism that he was able to instill into his cohorts. That cannot be pardoned. The tortures cannot be pardoned, the murders cannot be pardoned, otherwise, the Republic is lost.

On the other hand, there were some political blunders. Some individuals who had been appointed practically on the previous day, went ahead and appointed Francisco Rodriguez as provisional president of the Republic. We all took the streets to ask: Who is Pancho Rodriguez? Some said: Well, he is a friend of Noriega.

[Noli] He was the comptroller general.

[Mendoza] Very few remembered he was the comptroller general of the Republic. What a contrast with the professor! [reference to current Comptroller General Ruben Dario Carles] Can we forget that infinite blunder of having appointed Francisco Rodriguez as provisional president of the Republic? I think so, out of shame.

However, we continue to commit blunders. The legitimacy of Guillermo Endara depends on the vote that he received even from the National Guardsmen. For the love of God: Did it not depend on Yolanda Pulice [President of the Electoral Tribunal in the Noriega regime]?

It was a total lack of common sense for Yolanda Pulice, Luis Chen, and Manuel Icaza to declare Guillermo Endara, Ricardo Arias Calderon.... [pauses]

[Noli, whispers] Guillermo Ford.

[Mendoza, continuing] and Guillermo Ford as elected. These are the very three who, with a total lack of the most elementary decency, canceled the elections. I do not want to continue mentioning blunders because we would still be at it tomorrow.

[Noli] On that same train of thought, what can this nation, which appears totally lacking in common sense, offer us? This common sense appears to be the least common of all the senses.

[Mendoza] Harmodio Arias was not a good speaker, but he was an extraordinary writer. I recommend that you and my countrymen read an editorial written by Harmodio Arias on good sense and its importance in Panamanian public life. What is more, I am going to reproduce it in the PANAMA AMERICA [daily belonging to Arias family], because if we have good sense, maybe we can save the Republic.

[Noli] Nevertheless, it appears that at certain moments we let everything become a crisis. I am talking about matters that appear to have simple solutions. It appears that those who are in power—not now, or yesterday, or the day before yesterday—since some time back, are totally inexperienced in politics. It seems as if they have no framework on which to fall back. Is this a mistaken personal view?

[Mendoza] Here there are two factors that must be taken into account. One is the question whether or not Panama is part of Central America or of South America. Panama is neither of the two. Panama is a Caribbean nation. Panamanian politics are Caribbean. The second is.... [pauses] I am sure you recall Churchill and Eden. You are probably saying: What happened to him? He went mad. What do Churchill and Eden have to do with Panamanian politics? What has happened in Panamanian politics is that there is a lost generation. I will explain. The same way that in Europe, due to World War I, a whole generation was stupidly lost in the Flanders trenches—which was Eden's generation—here, a whole generation, which is my generation, was lost during the dictatorship's generation. The dictatorship lasted one whole generation.

Those of us who were slightly over 30 in 1968, were caught up in the restoration—certainly not of a monarchy, but in the restoration of a democracy—when we are over 50. One of two things happened to this generation of mine. Either they cooperated with the dictatorship, therefore they are now burned out, or they remained totally isolated and therefore they did not acquire any type of administrative experience. This explains to a great extent the weakness of those who currently are trying to administer the nation.

[Noli] Is there any slight hope for us?

[Mendoza] It left me pondering, Luz Maria, what hope we had following 20 December. We thought this little country we had was over for good. The country has risen because it has enormous potential, and we can move ahead with one ounce of goodwill and one quarter ounce of intelligence.

[Noli] Thank you, Mr. Mendoza. This has been "Dialogue" with Dr. Carlos Mendoza.

Argentina

Camilion Downplays 'Confrontation' With Cavallo

PY2604224393 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 24 Apr 93 p 1

[Text] (DYN-NA)—The Armed Forces' recent pronouncements over its financial difficulties simply demonstrate "concerns and needs" and are not intended to put pressure on the government, Defence Minister Oscar Camilion insisted yesterday after meeting with Army chiefs, headed by Army Chief-of-Staff Martin Balza.

According to the minister all meetings have revealed "similar" difficulties caused by lack of funds, an issue that was highlighted last week when the Air Force cancelled flights by Lineas Areas del Estado (LADE) to Patagonia.

In a joint press conference later, Camilion explained the military's deep concern about the current situation, but said recent statements had not been made to put pressure on the government into providing funds.

Like all ministries the defence portfolio has been ordered to make a 10-percent budget cutback, which Comilion faced as he took office three weeks ago. He yesterday denied he had had a confrontation with Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo over a budget increase and said the ministries "are discussing the relative budget figures for the third quarter of this year.

"The conversations are very rational and reasonable," Camilion insisted, telling journalists, "as a young man I wrestled, now I negotiate."

Balza said the meeting "not only touched on the budget question but also on the basics of the reorganization and restructuring procedures."

In the afternoon, Camilion faced a call from the Pecifa Armed Forces civilian personnel union, whose members demanded an urgent pay increase. During a meeting with the minister union leaders said current monthly wages range from 200 pesos to 600 pesos and have been static since March 1991. They also urged the minister "not to cut back hours or places of work." The union is scheduled to have a general meeting at the end of this month.

New Supreme Court Chief, Deputy Chief Justices Elected

PY2604161093 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 24 Apr 93 pp 1, 11

[Text] (DYN-NA)—After a long internal debate that left several other leading candidates by the wayside, Justices Antonio Boggiano and Rodolfo Barra were elected the new Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice, respectively, of the nation's Supreme Court.

Court Press Secretary Ricardo Arcucci announced early this afternoon that after a flurry of meetings this morning, Boggiano and Barra had emerged victorious in the struggle to name the justices who would lead the court for the next three years. Boggiano won the support of five of the nine members of the High Court—including four of the five justices who had up until hours before favoured current Chief Justice Ricardo Levene—while six voted for Barra to serve as the second-in-command.

In addition, the court voted to eliminate the post of second deputy chief justice occupied until yesterday by Barra.

In his surprise election, Boggiano edged out several other contenders pegged as more likely to lead the court. The two front- runners had been Levene and Barra's predecessor as deputy chief justice, Mariano Cavagna Martinez. Court sources indicated the body had had to seek out a third candidate when it became apparent that neither Levene nor Cavagna Martinez could attain a majority.

Boggiano was one of the last justices to be named after President Carlos Menem expanded the court to nine from five members and is considered by observers to be an apolitical man who has little interest in pomp and circumstance.

The new court chief's speciality is said to be private international law, an area in which he tends to vote independently. Court sources added that Boggiano is more likely to vote with the majority on penal code and federal issues. Boggiano and Barra are known for their devout Catholicism. The latter is a member of the Opus Dei lay organization, while both men teach at the Argentine Catholic University.

Barra served as the public works and interior ministers during the Menem administration before joining the court in 1990.

Bolivia

Political Representatives Address CEPB Forum

Patriotic Agreement Candidate on Goals

PY2304214093 La Paz HOY in Spanish 14 Apr 93 Section 2 p 7

[Text] On 13 April Hugo Banzer, presidential candidate of the ruling coalition Patriotic Agreement, attended the political conference sponsored by the Bolivian Private Businessmen Confederation (CEPB) and admitted that the implementation of Patriotic Agreement electoral proposals is tied to the sale of assets of state companies.

Banzer tied the creation of 356,000 new jobs, the 11 percent economic growth, the salary increase, and the implementation of education and health policies to the sale of 49 percent of the assets of public companies to private investors.

According to the Patriotic Agreement candidate this sale of assets will prompt investments amounting to $5.6

billion over the next four years. Banzer stressed that foreign companies are greatly interested in investing in Bolivia.

Banzer explained that these investments will create an average of 89,000 new jobs per year, and will help build houses for 70,000 families and develop a plan to provide 800,000 people with potable water.

Banzer hinted that should he fail in his bid for the presidential office, he will leave politics "to give younger generations the chance to manage the affairs of the country."

He added that even if he were to become Bolivia's next president, he will leave behind his political career at the end of his term in office (1997).

Banzer, who seems to have made up his mind on both counts, stated that he wants to step aside, leaving his party, the Nationalist Democratic Action, and the Patriotic Agreement as the pillars of Bolivian democracy.

Banzer said that he was absolutely confident that Patriotic Accord vice presidential candidate Oscar Paz Zamora would continue the neoliberal policy of the coalition if something unexpected were to happen.

The candidate for the ruling coalition emphasized that Zamora is convinced that the best approach to ensure the country's economic growth and the well-being of the people is the one that the Patriotic Agreement administration has been applying over the last four years.

Banzer made it clear that his administration will demand honesty from public servants in general and high-ranking officials in particular.

He assured the audience that he will not hesitate to have the law punish corrupt members of the state apparatus, although he acknowledged that misinterpretation has been preventing Bolivian laws from being properly applied in these cases.

MBL Representative on Development Plans

PY2304215193 La Paz HOY in Spanish 14 Apr 93 p 6

[Text] The third person to address the private enterprise forum, Antonio Aranibar, who represented the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL), submitted the "Program for Recovering Hope," which has as its basis the so-called National Pact for Eliminating Poverty.

He stated that the MBL alternative intends to counteract the high level of social injustice that originated in the implementation of the neoliberal model that achieved the country's stabilization at the cost of hurting the most disadvantage people.

"How false can the success of stabilization be when the only aspect that is shown is the spectacular wealth of those who are at the top, and which is used exclusively to demonstrate the averages of prosperity that hide the situation of those who are least favored. A stable economy without sustained growth is a failure in the same way as that of a growing economy without the distribution of income that inevitably slides toward a crisis, chaos, and the loss of credibility within the democratic system," Aranibar said.

He stated that as an alternative to the repeated offers of the parties that have a neoliberal tendency, the MBL places at the disposal of all Bolivians a development program that will allow the population to use its potential and lead a life with dignity and accomplishment.

Aranibar also stated that for the economy to grow on a solid basis it will have to nurture itself from the productive sectors that aim their targets at the internal and export markets with a high degree of local added value.

"The state must take an active role and must promote private national and foreign investment that must have an important impact on the level of employment and on the creation of foreign exchange," he said.

Aranibar stated that a vigorous program of social investment must be implemented together with the tasks of an economic nature.

He pointed out that in view of the consequences of the shock [preceding word in English] method applied in 1985 with the implementation of D.S. [Supreme Decree] No. 21,060 there is the need to propose a transition process within the development model by introducing the following reforms:

Social variables must be included in the final balance of the economy.

There must be coherence and harmony between the economic and social policies through an integrated policy.

The foundation and function of the economy must be based on its productive sectors.

The ample scope of private initiative must be multiplied at the same time that the state's social control cast is implemented and consolidated.

Aranibar recalled that in the past the state has been conceived as the only and necessary depositary of the common welfare and of the possibility of change, while the neoliberals tried to implement the privatizing and deregulation mania.

In view of this, he indicated that the MBL proposes to return to society the management of the levels for which it has the capability, "while the state must grow and acquire functions, levels, and institutions with the agreement of society for an efficient and participative management of itself."

He thus made it clear that the MBL is against neither privatization nor shared risks, and he also indicated that it aspires to head a consensus to define the borders, at

the priority level and with historical tact, between what is public and what is private.

"It is not our intention to decisively defend the state, nor is it our intention to reduce it to a minimum; we are above and beyond that sterile debate. With a concrete and practical intent, the MBL proposes that society should adopt a fresh consensus regarding the size of the state that is necessary to counteract the negative tendencies of readjustment within the framework of co-management between state and the civilian society," Aranibar explained.

He reiterated that the MBL has a commitment to struggle against impunity and corruption, and he stressed that they can count on the best calling to do this.

Aranibar stated that they will fight to the last man against this illness of society, both at the level of Congress and the executive branch if they assume the presidency.

UCS Candidate Addresses Forum

PY2304220193 La Paz HOY in Spanish 14 Apr 93 Section 2 p 7

[Excerpts] On 13 April Max Fernandez, presidential candidate for the Solidarity Civic Union (UCS), attended the political conference sponsored by the Bolivian Private Businessmen Confederation (CEPB). His confusing, poorly thought-out, and sometimes nonsensical presentation made those in the auditorium laugh.

The repetitive praising of the Bolivian National Brewery (CBN) [Cerveceria Boliviana Nacional], the constant attacks on his Conscience of the Fatherland (Condepa) enemies, superfluous proposals, and a confusing way of outlining them marked Fernandez' presentation, which made the audience at the political forum laugh several times.

Aware that his presentation was making the audience laugh, Fernandez made things even worse by saying things like "don't laugh, this is a serious matter," thus making obvious his lack of political training to handle debates of the kind sponsored by the CEPB.

Among the few coherent things he said, Fernandez stated that his party is still analyzing and polishing its government plan and will release it next month.

He explained that his party's government plan does not contain any major electoral promises but rather emphasizes its commitment to pursue the projects that his party and he himself have been working on during the past 12 years, and calls upon all social strata of the country "to work for social justice and to enjoy democracy."

Fernandez said that the UCS is planning to create between 100,000 and 150,000 new jobs by stimulating private enterprise.

The UCS candidate stated that if he were elected to manage state affairs he will not make any economic adjustments to raise the Gross Domestic Product but will instigate control and moralization mechanisms.

Fernandez explained that as far as education and health go, he is in favor of maintaining the welfare approach that he has developed as an industrialist and promised that whether or not he is elected to head the administration as of 6 August, he will continue building schools and health care facilities throughout the nation.

Fernandez promised to give priority support to agricultural and livestock activities, adding that the incoming administration should market agricultural and livestock surpluses abroad.

He said that the country will remain dependent on international financial organizations like the International Monetary Fund for the next four years at least.

He proposed seeking private financing for the construction of at least 3,000 km of highways and roads. He also proposed changing the constitution so that it would guarantee private, especially foreign, investments.

Fernandez chose to consult with the leadership of his party before answering questions about discentralization and creation of departmental legislative assemblies. [passage omitted]

Fernandez emphasized that he will carry out an "all-out struggle" against drug trafficking from which he did not rule out interdiction and militarization.

He went even further by saying that if the United States is interested in this "all-out struggle," the UCS mill make an effort to carry out joint tasks to eradicate drug trafficking from Bolivia. According to Fernandez, drug trafficking is a problem that involves producers, investors, and consumers.

One essential policy the UCS is planning to implement if it gets to be part of the incoming administration is encouraging the substitution of excess coca plantation. [passage omitted]

Condepa Candidate on Development Plan

PY2404000593 La Paz HOY in Spanish 14 Apr 93 Section 2 p 7

[Text] Carlos Palenque Aviles, Conscience of the Fatherland [Condepa] candidate for president of the Republic, has proposed a "Model of Endogenous Development To Strengthen National Potentials" based on the strategy of food self-sufficiency, moral revolution, and participatory democracy, as an instrument to begin the Bolivian socio-economic development.

He began his speech by recalling that the model proposed by Condepa stems from the foundation of that party on 21 September 1988.

Like the other leaders of United Left (IU) Ramiro Velasco and the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL) Antonio Aranibar, Palenque Aviles criticized the neoliberal model because of its purely economic characteristics disregarding the social aspect.

"This model is leading us to adopt foreign models for our economy and to the destruction of the productive sector," the candidate stated. He added that this situation has led the traditionally neoliberal parties to adopt endogenous positions.

He specifically referred to the Patriotic Accord and the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement [MNR], parties which included in their government programs guidelines of Condepa's program.

"Goni [Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada] and Banzer have become endogenous," Palenque Aviles said, and explained further that in the case of the MNR, which also adopted the participatory democracy (part of an endogenous growth) when a man of rural origin was chosen as candidate for vice president.

When government officials promote food self-sufficiency and parade the slogan "Bolivians First," they are also advocating the endogenous model. Palenque said: "We welcome those plagiarisms because they endorse the patriotic movement."

Palenque explained that the endogenous model will be based on honesty, austerity, efficiency, fairness, and agreement.

He added that food self-sufficiency will be achieved by means of a five-pronged strategy:

- a family basket that will include 15 basic goods.
- boosting agricultural and agroindustrial production.
- stemming rural exodus.
- stepping up imports of capital goods.
- key role of private investments in this endeavor.

Palenque explained that the basket of 15 basic products will be established according to regional characteristics, and more products may be added to it.

Additionally, he said that the "subsistence economy" criterion will be left aside and a reform of the tax system will be implemented.

Palenque advocated slashing the value added tax (IVA) from 13 to 10 percent and the financial operations tax from 2 to 1 percent.

Palenque stated that it will be possible to reduce these taxes because the state bureaucracy will be reduced, exports incentives will be implemented, and corruption in customs eliminated.

He further stated that imports of capital goods will be exempt from customs duties so as to boost domestic production.

Export promotion measures will include a reduction in transport costs of freight by rail and a price policy for gas that will allow Bolivian producers to purchase gas at the same price it is exported.

Palenque expounded his views on agricultural policy, which included consolidating the right to private property, the phasing out of food grants, respect for rural communities, and dividing the national territory into municipalities and cantons.

Regarding mining policy, he said that his government will opt for mixed enterprises to tap mineral resources and will promote the establishment of cooperatives as an alternate solution.

As for energy policy, Palenque proposed that Bolivians should regain total control of Bolivian Government Oil Deposits, eliminate secondary recovery contracts, and maximize the use of gas, both in homes and vehicles.

Palenque put forward several guidelines for his industrial policy that included promoting small-scale enterprises and cottage industries, constructing a road network to maximize the use of export channels, and establishing regional development banks to boost production.

He made it clear that Condepa is not against privatizations or joint risk ventures, but that a detailed case-by-case analysis is necessary before deciding to embark upon either option.

To conclude, Palenque reiterated that he would fight corruption by means of a law that will enable an investigation of the origins of people's wealth.

Brazil

Russia Reportedly To Sell Rocket Technology to Brazil

93WP0144A Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 14 Apr 93 p 10

[Article by Anastasiya Romashkevich, Russian Delegation in Latin America: "Brazil Interested in Russia's Space Technologies"]

[Text] The two-week tour of Latin America that began yesterday by a delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations of Russia, headed by the minister himself, was the realization of longstanding plans of Sergey Glazyev, who previously supervised the work of the bilateral commission on trade and economic relations with Brazil and Argentina. This delegation began its mission with Brazil as well. The purpose of the trip was to enliven trade and economic relations between Russia and countries of Latin America. During the trip, the delegation also intends to conclude contracts for the sale of products of the Russian military-industrial complex and also dual-purpose space technologies.

The visit of the Russian delegation is regarded in the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations within the framework of the strategy for activating foreign economic relations. As for the Latin American region itself which, unlike the West, is interested in acquiring from Russia not raw material but manufactured products, Russia might not merely earn foreign currency here but also partially solve the problem of conversion, having gained access to a very promising market for dual-purpose arms and technology. Up to this point it has belonged almost exclusively to the United States.

According to the assertions of certain Western experts, recently Russia has wanted to locate abroad, primarily in "new industrial countries," a number of enterprises of the military-industrial complex—in the form of joint ventures or daughter enterprises—and thus partially remove them from the area in which Western competitors are increasingly interested.

For its part, Brazil, represented by its largest financial-investment government corporation, FINEP, in October 1992 had already expressed a desire to purchase solid-fuel rocket engines from Russia. At that time there was frequent talk about the sale of prepared products and also the discovery of Russian enterprises interested in the creation of joint firms or the establishment of technical cooperation in this area.

Apparently, during the present trip representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations will try to establish stricter centralized control over exports, including military products, to Latin America.

Brazil is also interested in cooperating with Russia in the space area, particularly in the development of a system for inertia control of missile carriers. Moreover, Russia could receive a proposal to reconstruct, in conjunction with U.S. firms, the space vehicle launching site Alkantary in the state of Maranhao, whose geographical location makes it possible to save up to 30 percent of the rocket fuel when launching satellites.

KOMMERSANT will report on the results of the trip on 28 April.

Russia's Kozyrev To Visit in May, To Sign Agreements

PY2704001993 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 25 Apr 93 p 9

[By William Waack]

[Text] Moscow—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev will be visting Brazil at the beginning of May to sign a series of agreements. Among them is a Brazilian-Russian cooperation agreement for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Kozyrev will also be visiting Chile and Argentina as part of a tour, which Russian diplomats regard as an important turn toward Latin America.

In a recent talk with Russian journalists during a trip to the East, Kozyrev attached great importance to his trip to Brazil, which has been postponed twice this year because of Russian domestic developments.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has also been invited to visit Brazil, and it is still possible that he will make this trip before the second half of the year. Brazil is one of the main countries with which the Russian Government has chosen to diversify its trade, economic, political, and diplomatic ties.

The Russian foreign economic relations minister was recently in Brazil to continue negotiations started last year. These negotiations also encompass the transfer of Russian state-of-the-art technology in the military and short range missiles area.

Embraer [Brazilian Aeronautics Companny] signed an agreement with a Russian company for the building of a small plane to be used in agriculture. This would be the starting point for future cooperation in more sophisticated projects.

In addition to cooperation agreements for the peaceful use of nuclear energy (identical to the one Argentina has signed with Moscow), during Kozyrev's visit, which is marked for 6 May (the date is still to be confirmed) Brazil and Russia will sign an important agreement to fight nacrotrafficking.

With the opening of its borders, Russsia has become part of the cocaine route to Western Europe. In addition, it is expected that Russia and Brazil will sign cultural agreements and an environmental protection agreement.

Colombia

Constitutional Court Rules War Bonds Unconstitutional

PA2404040393 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Telephone interview with Hernando Herrera Vergara, chief justice of the Constitutional Court, by station announcer Dario Arismendi in Lima—live]

[Text] [Arismendi] The top story is the elimination of the so-called war bonds. The government, upon a Treasury Minister initiative, collected almost 220 billion pesos, which it must now return to the thousands of contributors. Why is this, Chief Justice Hernando Herrera Vergara of the Constitutional Court?

[Herrera] Good morning, Dario. Precisely as you have noted, the Constitutional Court on 22 April ruled that certain provisions of Law 6 of 1992 were unconstitutional. Specifically these are Articles 16, 17, and 18. These provisions granted the government the authority to issue the social development and internal security bond; to issue public debt notes for a total of 270 billion pesos; and stated that it was mandatory for all individuals and corporations whose income during fiscal year

1991 was greater than 7 million pesos or whose gross assets were greater than 30 million pesos to purchase such bonds.

[Arismendi] Yes, sir, but what is unconstitutional about this law?

[Herrera] It is not really a loan, according to the Constitutional Court. It is actually a tax disguised as a loan, because the main characteristic of a loan is that it is voluntary on the part of the loaner. In this case those taxpayers meeting the aforementioned requirements are obliged to pay the government, in this case, an amount in cash. There is something even more serious. The Constitution itself specifically states that laws regarding tax matters cannot have retroactive effects. To grant a law retroactive effects is specifically prohibited.

[Arismendi] What will happen with the interest? The government has a maximum of six months to reimburse the 220 billion it collected. Will that amount be reimbursed with interest?

[Herrera] No. The truth of the matter is that the court's ruling states that the money paid by the contributors must be refunded. It does not state an opinion on any interest. The court order is to reimburse the monies collected through the war tax.

[Arismendi] Mr. Herrera, why must we go against the effective measures the government is taking against the guerrillas and crime?

[Herrera] As a matter of fact, the government has had the support of the Constitutional Court by sanctioning the regulations regarding those issues. The funds needed to complete the task cannot be collected, however, by enforcing laws that contradict the Constitution. We believe we must not allow the government to fight subversion and crime by creating taxes that conflict with the Constitution. In this case, we have studied specific constitutional provisions establishing that, even for such a noble cause as fighting violence, these actions must be taken in accordance with the Constitution.

[Arismendi] Mr. Herrera, what will happen if the Treasury Ministry does not return the money within six months?

[Herrera] The mechanisms are set forth in the law for cases such as this. You are surely aware any amount not paid in time generates interest payments. Interest would be applicable if the taxes are not reimbursed.

[Arismendi] One final quick question Mr. Herrera. You have said this tax cannot be retroactive and that it should not be called a loan but a tax. Based on that, can the Congress now, as of tomorrow, say, create a law on nonretroactive security bonds, effective as of 1994, for example, and call it a tax?

[Herrera] I would have to say that the Constitutional Court's policy has always been not to issue any other statement except those regarding specific rulings. We could never formulate any sort of project on what to do and how to do it. One question we have been repeatedly asked is how will the taxpayers be paid and what must the government do? The government must establish these mechanisms. All we have done is to hand down a ruling. We do not have the authority to legislate on the specific details. The government will adopt whatever measures it needs to face this situation. As the acting treasury minister has said, we must comply with the ruling and find the way to solve the problems it poses.

President To Accept Court Ruling

PA2404040693 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Text] Two of the government's main programs—the modernization of the state and the war against drug trafficking and terrorism—are seriously threatened by legal rulings. The rulings have prompted the government's concern. It does not know where it will get money for the war bonds, which have already been spent, and the modernization of the state will have to be stopped. President Gaviria, who is in Bello, Antioquia, referred to this crisis a few minutes ago.

[Begin recording] [Gaviria] I understand several articles of the decree issued to modernize the National Training Service have been suspended. I still do not know the scope of the ruling.

I would like to point out that the National Government is aware that the powers assigned to it in those decrees by the National Constituent Assembly are very special and that their extent is difficult to determine. The government, thus, used the powers we judged were proper with complete respect for the Constitution.

We trust that, once the State Council decides on the issue, the decrees will prompt the modernization of the Colombian state to advance significantly, as this is urgently required.

[Unidentified reporter] [words indistinct] suspension of war bonds?

[Gaviria] We have not seen this ruling either. It seems to have serious fiscal implications. We have not received or studied the ruling yet. We are, of course, obliged to accept the ruling, regardless of the consequences. We hope it will not—but, unfortunately, believe it will—seriously jeopardize our capability to meet the country's public and social problems. I will issue my statements on the matter as soon as I receive the ruling and am able to determine all its implications. [end recording]

Official Views Alternatives

PA2404040793 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Report by Monica Echeverry]

[Text] The government blundered. It ordered that the famous war bonds be refunded and the Constitutional Court has just ruled that the war bonds are unconstitutional. The government collected 208 billion pesos [number as heard] in war bond taxes and now it has to refund the money. What and how will it do this? The first alternative is to cut government expenses in 1993.

[Begin National Tax Director Pedro Nel Ospina recording] It would mean a reduction of our current budget spending. We are studying other possibilities in case this is not enough. This, however, would also require budget modifications. [end recording]

A second way to get the money would be to offer government bonds at the stock market.

[Begin Ospina recording] Another possibility could be to further mortgage the official government bonds. We, however, first want to explore the possibility of reducing expenses in 1993. [end recording]

While the government looks for ways to return the 208 billion pesos to the 180,000 taxpayers, the people who filed suit against the war bonds have clearly stated that they want their money back immediately.

[Begin Eduardo Visbal, vice president of the National Businessmen Federation, recording] The money has to be returned in cash as soon as possible and hopefully with accrued interest. [end recording]

What is certain is that the government will notify taxpayers in the following days how it will return the money to them.

Police Arrest 13 People Responsible for Bomb Attack

PA2404140593 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Report by Azucena Lievano]

[Text] Jairo Leon Posada Palacios, alias La Picuda, following Pablo Escobar Gaviria's orders, organized and purchased dynamite for 26 million pesos, and decided on the location for the car bomb attack—15th Avenue and 93d Street in Santa Fe de Bogota. The blast killed 11 people, injured over 100, and caused property damage estimated at 1.6 billion pesos.

[Begin recording General Luis Montenergo, director, Judicial Police and Investigations Directorate] This man masterminded the 93d Street attack; this is the man who requested the money; this is the man who purchased the dynamite; and this is the man who decided where the car bomb was to be placed. [end recording]

La Picuda was arrested in Medellin on 15 April, the day of the attack. He confessed to his part in the attack and supplied the names of the other persons who participated in the terrorist attack.

The Search Block operation under the coordination of the Prosecutor General's Office, managed to arrest 12 additional criminals who received 8 million pesos to carry out the attack. The police action that began on 15 April, included 100 raids in Santa Fe de Bogota, Medellin, and La Ceja.

Authorities said that the criminals used 300 kg of dynamite, a tractor trailer to transport the explosives to Santa Fe de Bogota, and a taxi used by three of the terrorists—Edison Delgado, Hector Jaime Villa, and Robinson Valencia—to flee from the scene of the attack. In addition to the three terrorists, the following were arrested: Omar de Jesus Herrera, Victor Manuel Escobar Gonzalez, Jose Angel Jimenez, Nestor Raul Pinto, Carlos Herrera Rodriguez, Jose Lopez Castaneda, Wilson Gomez, Oscar Cordoba, and a woman—Consuelo del Socorro Gutierrez Sanchez, who was in possession of 15 R-15 rifles and grenade launchers.

The Santa Fe de Bogota terrorist attack had been planned prior to the death of Mario Castano Molina, alias El Chopo.

Jairo Leon Posada, alias La Picuda, and four other detainees, will be transferred to Medellin. The remaining eight will remain in Santa Fe de Bogota under the jurisdiction of the Prosecutor General's Office.

Paraguay

Colorado Leadership Urges Vote for Official Ticket

PY2304153793 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 22 Apr 93 p 8

[Editorial Report] Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish on 22 April on page 8 publishes a 600-word paid advertisement entitled: "Communique for the Colorado People," which is signed by the president, vice presidents, and members of the executive board of the Colorado Party.

The communique begins saying that the party's executive board assures party members that "it continues to fully support the party's candidates to achieve victory on 9 May."

It then alerts party members to a "campaign of distortion being implemented by the media," which "supports" the opposition candidates. It adds that a campaign has also been "mounted to discredit" the party and its leaders, seeking "to weaken them" for the 9 May elections.

The document condemns the polls, complaining that the party is "always relegated to second place" and stating that the pollsters "offer the best results to those who pay most."

The party's executive board expresses its confidence that the "campaigns unleashed against the party will not achieve the objective of shaming party members," that Colorados will always show their Colorado spirit.

It urges all party members, "except those who have resigned," to carefully consider all that is happening and fortify the party and its candidates.

Finally the document urges all party members to vote for the official ticket in order "to rescue the country from the Third World" and to strengthen the democratic process and defend collective and personal rights and guarantees "in order to develop a social, economic, cultural, and ecological policy to satisfy the aspirations of the Paraguay people."

Colorado Party Lawmakers Seek Suspension of Elections

PY2604173293 Asuncion Cerro Cora Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Late this morning several Colorado lawmakers lodged a petition with the Supreme Court to request that two executive branch decrees be declared unconstitutional. As an emergency measure, they requested that the Supreme Court suspend the 9 May elections and set a new date for them.

In an extensive petition, the Colorado lawmakers contend that Decrees No. 15465 and 15466 issued in 1992 must be declared unconstitutional. Through these decrees the executive branch called for general elections in the country.

In their petition they claim that there are 400,000 registered voters without a known address, and that this irregularity must be corrected. They also contend that several embassies are meddling in the electoral campaign, and that some $20 million had been obtained abroad to finance several electoral campaigns.

The petitioners also contend that there is a national and international campaign against the Colorado Party. These are the highlights of a brief containing several pages which was submitted to the Supreme Court.

The secretary of the Supreme Court will present the petition to the justices. The file will then be sent to the attorney general.

The petition was signed by 22 Colorado lawmakers, including [Senate President] Gustavo Diaz de Vivar, Pedro Hugo Fena, Julio Cesar Frutos, Persio Da Silva, Rolando Elizeche, and Ruben Stanley.

Wasmosy Opposes Petition To Postpone 9 May Elections

PY2604190993 Asuncion Radio Nanduti in Spanish 1750 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Colorado presidential candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy has stated his opinion on a petition filed by several congressmen, most of them members of the Colorado Party, to postpone the 9 May elections. Speaking to reporters, Wasmosy said:

[Begin recording] [Wasmosy] I knew absolutely nothing about the petition. I want to tell you, however, that this initiative has not come from the Colorado Party. In a democracy we must of course be broad-minded, and accept other people's opinions. I want to state, however, that I do not approve of the petition. I do share the president of the Republic's promise that there will be elections here on 9 May.

I also believe that this date must be respected. The Colorado Party has absolutely no need to postpone the elections in order to win them. The petition thus only reflects the personal opinion of some, which I do not share.

[Unidentified reporter] As you know, several analysts, and even ordinary people, believe that as we move closer to the elections date, if it appears that the Colorado Party will not win the elections, they would be suspended. What would be your response to that?

[Wasmosy] Those are personal opinions that I respect as a democrat, but I do not agree with them. Elections will be held on 9 May, and I hope that the courts will reconfirm that date because we are going to win the elections anyway. We do not need to resort to this type of trick to win them. Yet as I told you earlier, we cannot prevent unilateral actions by some fellow party members.

[Reporter] Are you saying that the petition was not filed by the Colorado Party as an institution?

[Wasmosy] Absolutely not. I can assure you on that.

[Reporter] Why do you think this attempt was made to postpone the elections?

[Wasmosy] It is an action taken by people who have not yet adjusted to the new era the country is experiencing.

[Reporter] Thank you. [end recording]

Poll Shows National Encounter Leads Presidential Race

PY2604211093

[Editorial Report] Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish on 24 April, pages 1 through 5, carries an approximately 600-word report on the recent poll conducted by Gallup enterprise at the request of ABC COLOR.

The poll reveals that if elections were held today, 35.8 percent of the people would vote for National Encounter presidential hopeful Guillermo Caballero Vargas, 26.6 percent for Colorado Party candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy, and 23.2 percent for PLRA [Authentic Radical Liberal Party] candidate Domingo Laino. In the Central Department, Caballero Vargas leads with 36.8 percent, followed by Wasmosy with 25.8 percent, and Laino with 23.4 percent, while in the rest of the country 31.1 percent

prefer Caballero Vargas, 28.4 percent would vote for Wasmosy, 25 percent for Laino, and 10.8 percent are undecided.

As for the voters' preference for governor of the Central Department, the poll reveals that 31.8 percent prefer PLRA candidate Luis Wagner, 28.5 percent for Colorado candidate Marcelino Aguayo, 25.5 percent for National Encounter candidate Ursino Barrios, and 11.3 percent are undecided.

The poll shows that the Colorado Party will obtain more votes for its candidates to the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate than those obtained by its presidential candidate.

When voters were asked who they would not like to see win the presidential elections, 37 percent said they did not know, 27 percent Laino, 25 percent Wasmosy, and only 2 percent Caballero Vargas; 2 percent also said Ricardo Canese of the Democratic and Social Coalition.

Asked who they thought would win the elections, 36 percent of the voters said Caballero Vargas, 26 percent Wasmosy, 18 percent Laino, and 18 percent said they did not know.

Wasmosy Says Polls Show Truth, Colorado Support Increasing

PY2604223293 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 24 Apr 93 p 7

[Report by "special correspondent" from Concepcion]

[Text] On 23 April Colorado Party presidential candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy acknowledged that the polls reported by various news media that show him behind National Encounter Alliance candidate Guillermo Caballero Vargas "have a great deal of truth in them."

He admitted that some polls may be biased but reiterated that the ones that have been carried out so far have a great deal of truth in them.

The Colorado Party candidate emphasized, however, that the polls are based on information gleaned the week before and explained that the Colorado Party's main problem is the shortness of its electoral campaign. He added: "Despite everything I am very pleased with what we have accomplished, because our campaign has lasted less than two months."

Asked what he felt when he read the polls that place him behind Caballero Vargas, while Colorado Party candidates for congress, governors, and departmental boards clearly lead the race, Wasmosy answered: "You must bear in mind that according to the trend shown by the polls, Caballero Vargas is losing ground, Domingo Laino [Authentic Radical Liberal Party candidate] is not moving, and we are climbing steeply. Let's talk again in eight days or so, as I am sure the situation will have changed by then."

Rodriguez Minimizes Importance of Poll Results

PY2604222993 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 24 Apr 93 p 7

[Report by Carlos Peralta and Eduardo Franco]

[Text] Asked about several surveys published in local newspapers, President Rodriguez said yesterday: "I have never trusted these surveys because they have always answered to the interests of those paying for them." The surveys in question place Colorado Party candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy behind National Encounter candidate Guillermo Caballero Vargas, and in some cases, in third place.

The president told reporters why he does not believe in the political polls published in the past few days. "I am sure that if I hire a team of surveyors they will give me the victory, or at least, place me ahead, because I am the one paying them."

After hearing these remarks of mistrust about the work of various media centers, we asked him what he thought about the survey conducted by the Sistema Nacional de Television [SNT], which has one of his sons-in-law as co-owner. Rodriguez answered: "I repeat that the surveys are not impartial, they answer to certain interests. We are going to see who has the majority on 9 May," Rodriguez stressed.

The survey conducted by the SNT place Caballero Vargas first with a little more than 30 percent; Domingo Laino, of the PLRA [Authentic Radical Liberal Party] is second, right behind Caballero Vargas; and Colorado Party candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy third, some points behind. The survey shows, however, that Colorados give stronger support to Colorado candidates for Congress, governor, and departmental boards throughout the country.

President Rodriguez urged the entire population to vote on 9 May. The president stressed the importance of everyone's participation, adding that the process must be peaceful and calm.

The president said he will order an investigation into the report published by the local media saying that the Alto Parana government delegate was distributing guns to local Colorados. "I do not want to believe the story, but if it is true we will take the appropriate measures," Rodriguez said.

Bishop Comments on Electoral Climate

PY2304232793 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 22 Apr 93 p 10

[Interview with Monsignor Carlos Milciades Villalba Aquino, Misiones and Neembucu Departments bishop, by Hugo Ruiz Olazar; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Ruiz] Do you think we will have calm elections?

[Villalba] The way I see it, which is based a little on news I receive from throughout the country and much more by what I see in my area of responsibility, there is confusion and danger. I think if the situation continues like it is today, instead of strengthening democracy we are going to destroy it...

[Ruiz] What is confusing, Monsignor? What is in danger?

[Villalba] First, I see a lot of fear, not only fear of electoral tricks but fear of other things.

[Ruiz] There is fear of fraud. Many people think that the government will just let it happen.

[Villaba] In the first place there is fear of fraud. I hope we will not see any fraud. I hope those in charge will prevent it with the appropriate supervision. Second, I would like to point out that I spent holy week in Pilar and I was surprised, because I perceived pressure being applied on voters. The pressure is not only in the form of false promises, privileges, and things like that. Pressure is also being applied through threats. [passage omitted]

[Ruiz] Do you believe that those people, those leaders who in the past had an absolute power monopoly in the interior of the country, still have the influence they had during former President Alfredo Stroessner's era?

[Villalba] There are things that the people who do not visit the interior do not know. Democracy has yet to arrive in many places in my own jurisdiction—in Misiones and Neembucu—despite the four years of transition. For instance, I know a population in Neembucu where Colorado leaders of the Stroessner era are still the kings, owners, and lords of their peoples' life and property.

[Ruiz] But that situation is rare today, isn't it?

[Villaba] We are concerned for the country's democratic future due to the total lack of ethics and respect for the people's will and common interest. I will repeat here the bishops' Easter message. It is clear and true that some people have no moral and ethical values. These people are only interested in remaining in or assuming power at any cost. These things are serious enough to threaten the democratic process.

[Ruiz] People often mention that Paraguayans do not have civic education and are easily influenced to vote this way or that.

[Villalba] Stroessner left, but his image remains. An entire culture of terror and fraud remained. We must all realize that this culture will not go away in a day or two. These people who have monopolized power throughout the years are gradually adjusting. Their names changed but they remain in power.

[Ruiz] Can a frightened voter overcome such a big hurdle?

[Villalba] We will violate the people's will if we do not respect the Constitution. There is no generalized willingness to recover essential moral values. This process is not on the right track. If we together try to recover our moral values perhaps in 10 years we will achieve something.

[Ruiz] When you say that the people's will is not being respected, are you referring to the reunion of Colorados with militants [a Colorado Party faction]?

[Villalba] He who exhibits the same old vices while speaking about democracy is lying. He is desecrating the tomb and the sacrifice of those who died on 2 and 3 February [1989, date of coup ousting Stroessner].

[Ruiz] What is your opinion about this reunion with the same people against whom those soldiers fought and expelled?

[Villalba] I think the reunion is a political move to get more votes. It is true that no one can take away their right to participate in politics, but to seek their alliance in order to get their votes without considering their background or their past behavior is not correct. On the contrary, I think they are going to lose votes. From what I hear, instead of winning votes they are going to lose votes.

[Ruiz] Is it a desperate call, as the opposition is calling it?

[Villalba] The situation is not clear. This is why we have become increasingly unbelieving and wonder whether they have something to hide.

[Ruiz] Do you think President Andres Rodriguez would approve any irregular situation that could stain or erase the merits he earned with the process?

[Villalba] That is another problem. I perceive doubts. I will be deeply sorry if something interrupted the process. This is a political moment that is out of the moral picture. What we see is not very encouraging. This is why we will wait to see.

[Ruiz] Where were you the day of the coup?

[Villalba] I was arriving in Misiones after a trip to Concepcion. I arrived the day before.

[Ruiz] At that time the bishops were skeptical about the sincerity of the coupists.

[Villalba] Initially that was so. In any case, at that time the bishops went to greet the new president and told him that the church was very hopeful that his administration would bring democracy to Paraguay. They congratulated him for his proclamation but also reminded him that the church also denounces and questions. The president answered: "Good for you."

[Ruiz] After spearheading the claims and giving shelter to the opposition the church backed off during the transition period.

[Villalba] In those days it was the voice of those who had no say. Now there is political freedom and freedom of expression. The church is now engaged in evangelical tasks.

[Ruiz] Bishops and priests have been playing less of a leading role...

[Villalba] Because the civilians play more leading roles.

[Ruiz] Now the bishops have suddenly changed their attitude and have been issuing communiques warning of threats to the democratic process...

[Villalba] Yes, because faced with... Right now we have to get together to strengthen democracy, otherwise we will foul things up... Therefore, one cannot keep silent. The church cannot keep silent when it sees that there are people who are trying to undermine democracy by disregarding every ethical and moral principle in order to retain power. These pressures are overt in rural areas, especially death threats against those who think differently from the local chieftain. We cannot tolerate this...

[Ruiz] Do bishops and priests mention elections in their Sunday homilies?

[Villalba] Our job here is to guide, to enlighten the people to act fairly and fully respect moral values. Our preaching emphasizes these values and the fact that each vote cast in keeping with his conscience will help define the future of each and every one of us. We urge the people to vote as Paraguayans and as christians, to vote according to their conscience for the best proposal and for the man who has the moral standing to implement his proposal. One must be careful, however. One must not look at the candidate alone. One must also look at the people around him. One should not be influenced by words alone, because words come easy. Making promises is easy. One should analyze them to see if they can be realized and whether there are men who can realize them.

[Ruiz] What about the pressures, the threats, the ignorance?

[Villalba] I think that they are all part of a system to scare people. Just because there is pressure and death threats I am not compelled to vote for the candidate who is pressuring me. Votes are secret and that is all there is to it. Let us look at it another way. Let us suppose that I am not being threatened. On the contrary, I am being offered large amounts of money. That is not enough to make me change my civic principles or ideas. In any case, one should vote for the program and the men capable of implementing the program that is best suited for the country's needs. The vote is one's contribution to the common good. I cannot foresake my conscience for egoistic interests or fear...

[Ruiz] What is the attitude of the church toward those who frighten, pressure or threaten? Can they be considered christians? Are they sinners?

[Villalba] Those who pressure other people are savages who receive their instructions from leaders without a conscience. These leaders pay no heed to moral and ethical values. Their only objective is to keep or attain power no matter the cost. These are dishonest people who do not respect moral and ethical principles.

[Ruiz] What is your message to the constituency?

[Villalba] To be patient, to vote according to their own conscience, to pay no heed to threats or pressures One should bear in mind one's commitment to the fatherland, and the fatherland does not come second, after the party. The parties should be at the service of the fatherland and not the other way around.

[Ruiz] And to those who are being pressured?

[Villalba] I tell them, of course, to pay no heed to pressures or threats... The vote is secret...

[Ruiz] Are you going to vote, Monsignor?

[Villalba] Of course, I will vote!

[Ruiz] Who will you vote for?

[Villalba] I have just told you that the vote is secret!

Peru

Japanese Creditors Reduce Debt Interests, Extend Deadline

PY2204161893 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 3 Apr 93 p 3

[Excerpts] The Governments of Peru and Japan yesterday signed four agreements for the renegotiation of the Peruvian debt with different Japanese organizations, reducing the interest rate, and extending the deadline for the payment of this debt.

The agreements to reschedule the debt payment were signed by Economy and Finance Minister Jorge Camet and Japanese Ambassador to Peru Nohuo Nishizaki, representing his government.

These agreements signed with the Japanese Government and the Japanese organizations Japeco [Japan-Peru Oil Company], Eximbank, and the OSF [expansion unknown] will reduce our debt from $1.5 billion to $1.117 billion.

The largest and oldest pending debt to Japan is that contracted in 1974 between Petroperu [State Petroleum Agency] and Japeco, not endorsed by the government, for the construction of the north Peruvian oil pipeline.

The total amount of the debt to that Japanese consortium amounted to approximately 135 billion yen, equivalent to $1.1 billion, and thanks to the signing of the agreement it has been reduced to 82 billion yen ($850 million).

It was also established that the debt to Japeco will be paid in 25 years, with a 14-year grace period. Moreover, no payment will be made this year, and the penalty rate charged on overdue payments of the principal and interest will be reduced from 14.5 percent to 6.5 percent annually.

The economy minister said that the Japanese Government has granted conditions for the payment of the pending debt much more favorable than those agreed upon in the original contracts and than those obtained at the Paris Club.

"Japan is one of the countries within the international financial community which has granted the most support in the process of our reinstatement in the international financial community and in paying our pending debts," Camet said. [passage omitted]

The minister explained further that half of the pending debt with the Paris Club is renegotiable, and so he expressed his confidence that the Paris Club will grant extended facilities to Peru to meet its financial obligations.

Moreover, the Japanese ambassador said that the signing of the four agreements with several Japanese organizations is an important step by the Peruvian Government to consolidate its reinstatement into the international financial system.

He expressed satisfaction over the good conclusions of the negotiations between 8 and 11 March, when Minister Camet traveled to Tokyo to sign bilateral agreements.

The Japanese ambassador said: "Japan took into consideration during these negotiations the difficult economic situation Peru is experiencing and the friendship ties that unite these two countries."

He added that once Peru pays all its overdue debts, his country will resume financing projects for further development.

British Ambassador Interviewed on Investment Plans

PA2504133893 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Text] The UK will contribute $5 million for the creation of the second group of support for Peru. Next week, British technicians will reportedly arrive in Peru to explore investment possibilities. The announcement was made by British Ambassador Keith Haskell.

[Begin recording][Unidentified reporter] Are British businessmen interested in investing in Peru? If this is the case, when will they be arriving?

[Haskell] I believe so. We are about to finish drafting an agreement on the promotion and protection of investments. When this bilateral agreement is completed, it will be much easier for British companies to invest in Peru.

[Reporter] Will the UK participate in the second group of support for Peru? Germany confirmed its participation this week.

[Haskell] We confirmed our participation a month ago with 3 million sterling pounds, which is $5 million more or less. A group of experts will be arriving in early May to reach an agreement with Peruvian authorities over the disbursement of this amount.

[Reporter][Question indistinct]

[Haskell] There are other types of cooperation. Another group of experts—engineering and natural resources experts—will meet with several Peruvian experts to talk about expanding technical cooperation. [end recording]

German Officials Discuss Renewing Support

PA2204194593 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0316 GMT 22 Apr 93

[Text] Jaime Yoshiyama [Democratic Constituent Congress president] met with a group of high-ranking German Government officials led by Franz Freiherr von Mentzingen, Germany's ambassador to Peru. They met for nearly one hour and discussed the renewal of bilateral cooperation between the two nations. Cooperation was suspended following the 5 April 1992 self-inflicted coup, but humanitarian and social aid has continued, the officials explained.

Bernard Schweiger, director general of bilateral cooperation in the German Government, attended the meeting. He said his government will participate in the second support group for Peru, but the amounts have not been established.

[Begin Schweiger recording in German with passage by passage translation into Spanish] We are not discussing amounts right now because we must prepare specific cooperation programs. However, formal intergovernmental negotiations will be held before the end of this year. I believe we will discuss an important program within this context. A meeting of the World Bank consultative group is scheduled for June, and we will discuss the reform program in Peru. [end recording]

Uruguay

President Receives Draft of Constitutional Reform Plan

PY2404191393 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 0930 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Text] The vice president of the Republic, Dr. Gonzalo Aguirre, and Senator Carlos Julio Pereyra last night delivered to President Luis Alberto Lacalle a constitutional reform draft that was jointly drawn up by Senator Hugo Batalla and former Senator Jorge Battle.

The draft proposes the implementation of a parliamentary system of government, including the establishment of the post of prime minister, who would discharge some

presidential duties and must receive congressional support, and a number of electoral reforms with the possibility of receiving votes under the so-called accidental lemas [lemas accidentales] system.

Upon leaving the presidential residence, the Blanco Party leaders reported that the draft also proposes removing the requirement of voting for the same lema nationally and departmentally, as well as separate ballots for presidential and vice presidential tickets and legislative posts. The draft also removes the addition of sublemas in the deputy elections. In other words, the triple simultaneous vote [triple voto simultaneo], as Dr. Aguirre described it, is removed.

Nevertheless, the vice president noted that, given the current political circumstances in our country, it is not possible to believe that the double simultaneous vote [doble voto simultaneo] will be removed during the next national elections, and an effort will be made to implement the process (?to introduce) changes.

For his part, Senator Pereyra said that contrary to what people might have believed, the so-called Group of Four did not draw up a constitution, but a draft to be discussed with other sectors. Pereyra reported that Dr. Lacalle heard their viepoints [words indistinct] when Herreraism [a Blanco Party faction] will technically and politically review [words indistinct] and [words indistinct] will give the appropriate response.

Tupamaro Leader Says Movement Target of 'Wave of Violence'

PY2604135693 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Eleuterio Fernandez Huidobro, leader of the Tupamaro National Liberation Movement [MLN], said yesterday during a news conference that the MLN has over the past few days been the target of a wave of violence resulting in one death, and including a shootout and the painting of swastikas.

Fernandez Huidobro said that on 24 April (Ronnie Escarcela), leader of the Movement for Land [Movimiento por la Tierra], founded by Raul Sendic and former Tupamaro leaders in 1965, was found dead from a gunshot to the head.

Fernandez Huidobro said that preliminary reports talked about suicide, but everything indicates that (Escarcela) was murdered, as the bullet went in through the left side of his head and (Escarcela) was right-handed. Fernandez Huidobro also mentioned that when his body was found (Escarcela) was wearing a hood which had no signs of the bullet's entry.

Fernadez Huidobro also mentioned that unidentified individuals last week painted swastikas on the front wall of the last house in which Raul Sendic had lived. This happened on the same day Sendic's former comrade [not further indentified] met with other Tupamaro militants who had been held under arrest at Marine headquarters.

Fernandez Huidobro added that last week shots were fired against a branch of the Movement For Land in the Canelon Chico area.

The MLN leader added that the incidents might have been perpetrated by rightist terrorists who seek to cause unrest and are inciting them to adopt defensive measures. He said: They are probably provoking us, but I urged all MLN members not to react.

He also said that Deputy Helios Sarthuo will discuss these incidents with Interior Minister Juan Andres Ramirez, whom he will try to contact in the next few hours.

New Defense Undersecretary Installed

PY2404011693 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Apr 93

[Text] Rodolfo Gonzalez Risondo was installed today as new defense under secretary by Defense Minister Mariano Brito.

[Begin recording] [Gonzalez] You know that having been chosen for this post is a great honor and responsibility for me, given that the president and the defense minister trust me to cooperate with them from this post.

[Reporter] It has been said that you will deal with the Armed Forces instruction. Could you explain further?

[Gonzalez] Well, given my background, the minister thought that I could best cooperate in the field of education and military instruction.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Gonzalez] That has not yet been specified; the idea aims at that goal. [end recording]

Venezuela

Foreign Minister Negotiating With EC on East European Immigrants

BR2304125293 Groot-Bijgaarden DE STANDAARD in Dutch 23 Apr 93 p 6

[Article by "FVDB": "Venezuela Willing To Accept East European Immigrants With EC's Support"]

[Text] Brussels—Venezuela is negotiating an agreement with the EC to accept 10,000 immigrants a year from Eastern Europe. This was announced by Venezuelean Foreign Minister Fernando Antonio Ochoa Antich, at a news conference in Brussels yesterday.

Minister Ochoa said that the program aims at a selective immigration of East Europeans. Their country of origin matters less than their level of training and expertise.

"We are working on a plan to accept about 10,000 immigrants a year," Ochoa said. "It already has been initiated, but a few problems remain. We feel the EC should create a favorable climate for this immigration."

When asked what impact this immigration could have on the socioeconomic situation in Venezuela, the minister said: "Unemployment has dropped, and it is believed that it will continue to drop. Unemployment in Venezuela is due largely to the lack of adequate training of part of the population."

Minister Ochoa also advocated the necessity of creating a new image of Latin America. "We are proud of the major changes we have implemented, but apparently international opinion has not perceived these changes yet. Almost all of Latin American currently is living in peace. Also, democratic institutions have been restored, with the exception of Peru and Colombia, where some elements of violence still persist."

Economically speaking, Latin America is no longer what it used to be, Ochoa stated. "We have shaken off the old policy of closing our economies to boost the replacement of imports. In Latin America, an open and competitive economy is prevailing. Europe must know that profitable business can be carried out in Latin America these days in a climate of political and legal stability.

Coup

Last year, there were two attempted coups and social unrest in Venezuela, with violent protests against the neoliberal savings policy. President Carlos Andres Perez and part of the political world was discredited by reports of corruption. There are rumors that the presidential elections scheduled for December will be advanced to speed up Perez' departure and thus reduce tensions.

However, Minister Ochoa was optimistic. "We recovered from the crisis," he said. "The presidential elections will take place in December; we will wait quietly until the end of Perez' term to elect a new president."

For a long time, our country has known a populistic system, in which the state, thanks to the oil profits, was regarded as a generous donor. The crisis has been overcome, and Venezuela is determined to implement major political and social changes through next December's election process."

President Perez has not made any foreign trips lately. Ochoa denies that this is due to the country's instability, but because parliament, under pressure from the opposition, is using its right to forbid the president from traveling abroad.

Bomb Thrown at Magazine Editor's Home

PA2304163193 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0111 GMT 23 Apr 93

[Text] Caracas, 22 Apr (EFE)—A spokesperson for the Venezuelan magazine ZETA disclosed that a bomb thrown on 22 April by unknown persons at the Caracas home of the magazine's director Jurate Rosales had exploded and caused some damage.

ZETA magazine is well known for its constant critical position against the government, especially against President Carlos Andres Perez.

The magazine spokesperson pointed out that DISIP [Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services] officials have launched an investigation, but have expressed their skepticism with respect to obtaining results. "I doubt we will ever know who threw the bomb since we are convinced that high government officials are involved in this incident," the ZETA spokesperson stated.

The magazine's editor, Rafael Poleo, was forced to flee to the United States when, after having denounced an attack on his home by alleged state security members, an arrest order was issued against him on charges of illegal possesion of collector's weapons.

Poleo reported his case against the Inter-American Press Society (SIP) which in turn expressed its support and gave assurances that he is being politically persecuted by the Venezualan Government.